Tyrannick Love;

OR, THE

Royal Martyr.

A

TRAGEDY.

As it is Acted by His Majeſtie's Servants at the

THEATRE ROYAL.

By *JOHN DRYDEN*, Servant to his Majeſty.

Non jam prima peto——neq; vincere certo;
Extremum rediiſſe pudet.——Virg.

LONDON,

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TO THE

Most Illustrious Prince,

JAMES,

Duke of *Monmouth* and *Bucclugh*,

One of His Majestie's most Honourable Privy Council, and Knight of the most Noble Order of the Garter, &c.

SIR,

THE favourable Reception which your Excellent Lady afforded to one of my former Plays, has encouraged me to double my Presumption, in addressing this to your Grace's Patronage. So dangerous a thing it is to admit a Poet into your Family, that you can never afterwards be free from the chiming of ill Verses, perpetually sounding in your Ears, and more troublesome than the Neighbourhood of Steeples. I have been favourable to my self in this expression; a zealous Fanatick would have gone farther, and have called me the Serpent, who first presented the fruit of my Poetry to the Wife, and so gain'd the opportunity to seduce the Husband. Yet I am ready to avow a Crime so advantageous to me; but the World, which will condemn my boldness, I am sure will justifie and applaud my choice. All men will join with me in the Adoration which I pay you, they would wish only I had brought you a more noble Sacrifice. In-

stead of an Heroic Play, you might justly expect an Heroic Poem, filled with the past Glories of your Ancestors, and the future certainties of your own. Heaven has already taken care to form you for an Heroe. You have all the advantages of Mind and Body, and an Illustrious Birth, conspiring to render you an extraordinary Person. The *Achilles* and the *Rinaldo* are present in you, even above their Originals; you only want a *Homer*, or a *Tasso*, to make you equal to them. Youth, Beauty, and Courage, (all which you possess in the height of their perfection) are the most desireable gifts of Heaven: and Heaven is never prodigal of such Treasures, but to some uncommon purpose. So goodly a Fabrick was never framed by an Almighty Architect for a vulgar Guest. He shewed the value which he set upon your Mind, when he took care to have it so nobly and so beautifully lodg'd. To a graceful fashion and deportment of Body, you have joined a winning Conversation, and an easie Greatness, derived to you from the best, and best belov'd of Princes. And with a great power of Obliging, the World has observed in you, a desire to Oblige, even beyond your power. This, and all that I can say on so excellent and large a Subject, is only History, in which Fiction has no part; I can employ nothing of Poetry in it, any more than I do in that humble Protestation which I make, to continue ever

Your Grace's most obedient

and most devoted Servant,

John Dryden.

PREFACE.

I Was mov'd to write this Play by many Reasons: amongst others, the Commands of some Persons of Honour, for whom I have a most particular respect, were dayly sounding in my ears, that it would be of good example to undertake a Poem of this Nature. Neither were my own inclinations wanting to second their desires. I considered that pleasure was not the only end of Poesie; and that even the instructions of Morality were not so wholly the business of a Poet, as that the Precepts and examples of Piety were to be omitted. For to leave that employment altogether to the Clergy, were to forget that Religion was first taught in Verse: (which the lazines or dulnes of succeeding Priesthood, turn'd afterwards into Prose.) And it were also to grant, (which I never shall) that representations of this kind may not as well be conducing to Holines, as to good Manners. Yet, far be it from me, to compare the use of Dramatique Poesie with that of Divinity: I only maintain, against the Enemies of the Stage, that patterns of Piety, decently represented, and equally removed from the extremes of Superstition and Prophaneness, may be of excellent use to second the Precepts of our Religion. By the Harmony of words, we elevate the mind to a sense of Devotion, as our solemn Musick, which is inarticulate Poesie, does in Churches. And by the lively images of Piety, adorn'd by action, through the senses, allure the Soul: which, while it is charmed in a silent joy of what it sees and hears, is struck at the same time with a secret veneration of things Celestial: and is wound up insensibly into the practice of that which it admires. Now, if, instead of this, we sometimes see on our Theatres, the Examples of Vice rewarded, or at least unpunished; yet it ought not to be an Argument against the Art, any more than the Extravagances and Impieties of the Pulpit in the late times of Rebellion, can be against the Office and Dignity of the Clergy.

But many times it happens, that Poets are wrongfully accus'd, as it is my own Case in this very Play; where I am charg'd by some ignorant or malicious Persons, with no less Crimes than Prophaneness and Irreligion.

The

The Part of Maximin, *against which these holy Criticks so much declaim, was design'd by me to set off the Character of St.* Catharine. *And those who have read the* Roman *History, may easily remember, that* Maximin *was not only a bloudy Tyrant,* vastus corpore, animo ferus, *as* Herodian *describes him; but also a Persecutor of the Church, against which he raised the Sixth Persecution. So that whatsoever he speaks or acts in this Tragedy, is no more than a Record of his Life and Manners; a Picture as near as I could take it, from the Original. If with much Pains and some success I have drawn a deform'd Piece, there is as much of Art, and as near an imitation of Nature, in a* Lazare, *as in a* Venus. Maximin *was an Heathen, and what he speaks against Religion, is in contempt of that which he profess'd. He defies the Gods of* Rome, *which is no more than St.* Catharine *might with decency have done. If it be urged, that a person of such Principles who scoffs at any Religion, ought not to be presented on the Stage; why then are the Lives and Sayings of so many wicked and prophane persons, recorded in the Holy Scriptures? I know it will be answer'd, That a due use may be made of them; that they are remembred with a Brand of Infamy fixt upon them; and set as Sea-marks for those who behold them, to avoid. And what other use have I made of* Maximin? *have I proposed him as a pattern to be imitated, whom, even for his impiety to his false Gods, I have so severely punish'd? Nay, as if I had foreseen this Objection, I purposely remov'd the Scene of the Play, which ought to have been at* Alexandria *in* Egypt, (*where St.* Catharine *suffer'd*) *and laid it under the walls of* Aquileia *in* Italy, *where* Maximin *was slain: that the punishment of his Crime might immediately succeed its execution.*

This, Reader, is what I ow'd to my just defence, and the due reverence of that Religion which I profess, to which all Men, who desire to be esteemed good or honest are obliged: I have neither leisure nor occasion to write more largely on this Subject, because I am already justified by the sentence of the best and most discerning Prince in the World, by the suffrage of all unbiass'd Judges; and, above all, by the Witness of my own Conscience, which abhors the thought of such a Crime; to which I ask leave to add my outward Conversation, which shall never be justly tax'd with the Note of Atheism or Prophaneness.

In what else concerns the Play, I shall be brief: for the faults of the Writing and Contrivance, I leave them to the mercy of the Reader. For

I am as little apt to defend my own Errors, as to find those of other Poets. Only I observe, that the great Censors of Wit and Poetry, either produce nothing of their own, or what is more ridiculous than any thing they reprehend. Much of ill Nature, and a very little Judgment, go far in finding the mistakes of Writers.

I pretend not that any thing of mine can be correct: This Poem, especially, which was contrived and written in seven Weeks, though afterwards hindred by many Accidents, from a speedy Representation, which would have been its just excuse.

Yet the Scenes are every where unbroken, and the unities of place and time more exactly kept, than perhaps is requisite in a Tragedy; or at least than I have since preserv'd them in the Conquest of Granada.

I have not every where observ'd the equality of numbers, in my Verse; partly by reason of my haste; but more especially because I would not have my Sence a Slave to Syllables.

'Tis easie to discover that I have been very bold in my alteration of the Story, which of it self was too barren for a Play: and that I have taken from the Church two Martyrs, in the persons of Porphyrius *and the Empress, who suffer'd for the Christian Faith, under the Tyranny of* Maximin.

I have seen a French *Play called the Martyrdom of St.* Catharine: *but those who have read it, will soon clear me from stealing out of so dull an Author. I have only borrow'd a mistake from him, of one* Maximin *for another: for finding him in the* French *Poet, call'd the Son of a* Thracian *Herdsman, and an* Alane *Woman, I too easily believ'd him to have been the same* Maximin *mention'd in* Herodian. *Till afterwards, consulting* Eusebius *and* Metaphrastes, *I found the* Frenchman *had betrayed me into an Error (when it was too late to alter it) by mistaking that first* Maximin *for a second, the Contemporary of* Constantine the Great, *and one of the Usurpers of the Eastern Empire.*

But neither was the other name of my Play more fortunate: for as some who had heard of a Tragedy of St. Catharine, *imagin'd I had taken my Plot from thence; so others, who had heard of another Play, called* L'Amour Tyrannique, *with the same ignorance, accus'd me to have borrow'd my design from it, because I have accidentally given my Play the same Title; not having to this day seen it: and knowing only by report, that such a Comedy is extant in* French, *under the name of Monsieur* Scudery.

As

As for what I have said of Astral or Aerial Spirits, it is no invention of mine, but taken from those who have written on that Subject. Whether there are such Beings or not, it concerns not me; 'tis sufficient for my purpose, that many have believ'd the affirmative: and that these Heroick Representations, which are of the same Nature with the Epick, are not limited, but with the extremest bounds of what is credible.

For the little Criticks who pleas'd themselves with thinking they have found a flaw in that line of the Prologue, (And he who servilely creeps after Sence, is safe, *&c.*) *as if I Patroniz'd my own Nonsence, I may reasonably suppose they have never read* Horace, Serpit humi tutus, *&c. are his words: He who creeps after plain, dull, common Sence, is safe from committing Absurdities; but can never reach any heighth, or excellence of Wit: and sure I could not mean that any excellence were to be found in Nonsence. With the same ignorance, or malice, they would accuse me for using,* empty Arms, *when I writ of a Ghost or Shadow: which has only the appearance of a Body or Limbs, and is empty or void of flesh and blood; and* vacuis amplectitur ulnis, *was an Expression of* Ovid's *on the same Subject. Some Fool before them had charg'd me in the* Indian Emperor *with Nonsence in these words,* And follow Fate which does too fast pursue; *which was borrow'd from* Virgil *in the* 11*th of his Æneids,* Eludit gyro interior, sequiturque sequentem. *I quote not these to prove that I never writ Nonsence, but only to shew that they are so unfortunate as not to have found it.*

VALE.

Prologue.

Prologue.

Self-Love (which never rightly understood)
Makes Poets still conclude their Plays are good:
And malice in all Criticks reigns so high,
That for small Errours, they whole Plays decry;
So that, to see this fondness, and that spite,
You'd think that none but Mad men judge *or* write.
Therefore our Poet, as he thinks not fit
T' impose upon you what he writes, for Wit,
So hopes, that leaving you your censures free,
You equal Judges of the Whole will be:
They judge but half who only faults will see.
Poets, like Lovers, should be bold and dare,
They spoil their business with an over-care:
And he who servilely creeps after Sence,
Is safe, but ne'r will reach an Excellence.
Hence tis, our Poet in his conjuring,
Allow'd his Fancy the full scope and swing.
But when a Tyrant for his Theme he had,
He loos'd the Reins, and bid his Muse run mad:
And though he stumbles in a full Career;
Yet Rashness is a better fault than Fear.
He saw his way; but in so swift a Pace,
To chuse the Ground, might be to lose the Race.
They then who of each Trip th' advantage take,
Find but those faults which they want Wit to make.

Who reign but while the people they can pleaſe,
And only know the little Arts of Peace.
Clar. In Fields they dare not fight where Honour calls;
But breathe a faint defiance from their Walls.
The very noiſe of War their Souls does wound;
They quake, but hearing their own Trumpets ſound.
Val. An eaſie Summons but for Form they wait,
And to your Fame will open wide the Gate.
Placid. I wiſh our Fame that ſwift ſucceſs may find;
But Conqueſts, Sir, are eaſily deſign'd:
However ſoft within themſelves they are,
To you they will be valiant by deſpair:
For having once been guilty, well they know
To a revengeful Prince they ſtill are ſo.
Alb. 'Tis true, that, ſince the Senate's Succours came,
They grow more bold.
Max. ——That Senate's but a name:
Or they are Pageant Princes which they make;
That pow'r they give away, they would partake.
Two equal Pow'rs, two different ways will draw,
While each may check, and give the other Law.
True, they ſecure Propriety and Peace;
But are not fit an Empire to encreaſe.
When they ſhould aid their Prince, the Slaves diſpute;
And fear ſucceſs ſhould make him abſolute.
They let Foes conquer to ſecure the State,
And lend a Sword, whoſe edge themſelves rebate.
Char. When to encreaſe the Gods you late are gone,
I'll ſwiftly chuſe to dye, or reign alone:
But theſe half-Kings our Courage cannot fright;
The thrifty State will bargain e're they fight:
Give juſt ſo much for every Victory;
And rather loſe a Fight, than over-buy.
Max. Since all delays are dangerous in War,
Your men, *Albinus*, for aſſault prepare:
Criſpinus and *Menephilus*, I hear
Two Conſulars, theſe *Aquileians* cheer;
By whom they may, if we protract the time,
Be taught the Courage to defend their crime
Placid. Put off th' aſſault but only for this day:
No loſs can come by ſuch a ſmall delay.
Char. We are not ſure to morrow will be ours;
Wars have, like Love, their favourable hours:
Let us uſe all: for if we loſe one day,
That white one in the Crowd may ſlip away.

Max.

Max. Fates dark receſſes we can never find;
But Fortune, at ſome hours, to all is kind;
The lucky have whole days, which ſtill they chooſe;
Th'unlucky have but hours, and thoſe they loſe.
Placid. I have conſulted one, who reads Heav'ns doom,
And ſees, as preſent, things which are to come.
'Tis that *Nigrinus*, made by your command
A Tribune in the new Panonian Band.
Him have I ſeen, (on *Iſter*'s Banks he ſtood,
Where laſt we winter'd) bind the head-long floud
In ſudden Ice; and where moſt ſwift it flows,
In Cryſtal Nets, the wond'ring Fiſhes cloſe.
Then, with a moments Thaw, the ſtreams inlarge,
And from the Meſh the twinkling Gueſts diſcharge.
In a deep Vale, or near ſome ruin'd Wall,
He would the Ghoſts of ſlaughter'd Souldiers call;
Who, ſlow, to wounden bodies did repair,
And loath to enter, ſhiver'd in the air;
Theſe his dread Wand did to ſhort life compel,
And forc'd the Fates of Battels to foretel.
Max. 'Tis wond'rous ſtrange! But, good *Placidius*, ſay,
What propheſies *Nigrinus* of this day?
Placid. In a lone Tent, all hung with black, I ſaw,
Where in a Square he did a Circle draw:
Four Angles, made by that Circumference,
Bore holy words inſcrib'd, of myſtick ſenſe.
When firſt a hollow Wind began to blow,
The Sky grew black, and belli'd down more low,
Around the field did nimble Lightning play,
Which offer'd us by fits, and ſnatch'd the day.
'Midſt this, was heard the ſhrill and tender cry
Of well-pleas'd Ghoſts, which in the ſtorm did fly;
Danc'd to and fro, and skim'd along the ground,
Till to the Magick Circle they were bound.
They courſing it, while we were fenc'd within,
We ſaw this dreadful Scene of Fate begin.
Char. Speak without fear; what did the Viſion ſhew?
Placid. A Curtain drawn preſented to our view,
A Town beſieg'd; and on the neighb'ring Plain.
Lay heaps of Viſionary Soldiers ſlain.
A riſing Miſt obſcur'd the gloomy head
Of one, who in Imperial Robes lay dead.
Near this, in Fetters, ſtood a Virgin, crown'd;
Whom many *Cupids* ſtove in vain to wound:

A voice

A voice to morrow, ſtill to morrow rung:
Another *Io*; *Io*, *Pæan*, ſung.
Char. Viſions and Oracles ſtill doubtful are,
And ne'r expounded till th'event of War.
The gods fore-knowledge on our Swords will wait:
If we fight well they muſt foreſhow good Fate.
[*To them a Centurion.*
Cent. A riſing duſt which troubles all the Air,
And this way travels, ſhows ſome Army near.
Char. I hear the ſound of Trumpets from afar. [*Exit* Albinus.
Max. It ſeems the voice of Triumph, not of War.
[*To them* Albinus *again.*
Alb. Health and Succeſs our Emperour attends;
The Forces marching on the Plain, are Friends.
Porphyrius, whom you *Ægypt*'s Prætor made,
Is come from *Alexandria* to your aid.
Max. It well becomes the Conduct and the Care
Of one ſo fam'd and fortunate in War.
You muſt reſign, *Placidius*, your Command,
To him I promis'd the Prætorian Band.
Your duty in your ſwift compliance ſhow,
I will provide ſome other Charge for you.
Placid. May *Cæſar*'s pleaſure ever be obey'd,
With that ſubmiſſion which by me is paid.
Now all the Curſes Envy ever knew,
Or could invent, *Porphyrius* purſue. [*Aſide.*
Alb. *Placidius* does too tamely bear his loſs; [*To* Charinus.
This new Pretender will all pow'r ingroſs:
All things muſt now by his direction move;
And you, Sir, muſt reſign your Father's love.
Char. Yes; every name to his repute muſt bow;
There grow no Bays for any other Brow.
He blaſts my early Honour in the bud,
Like ſome tall Tree the Monſter of the Wood.
O'r-ſhading all which under him would grow,
He ſheds his venom on the Plants below.
Alb. You muſt ſome noble action undertake;
Equal with his your own renown to make.
Char. I am not for a ſlothful envy born,
I'll do't this day, in the dire Viſions ſcorn.
He comes: We two, like the Twin-Stars appear;
Never to ſhine together in one Sphere. [*Exit cum* Alb.

Enter

Enter Porphyrius *attended.*

Max. Porphyrius, welcome, welcome as the light
To cheerful Birds; or as to Lovers, night.
Welcome as what thou bring'ſt me, Victory.
Per. That waits, Sir, on your Arms, and not on me.
You left a Conqueſt more than half atchiev'd;
And for whoſe eaſineſs I almoſt griev'd.
Yours only the *Ægyptian* Laurels are;
I bring you but the reliques of your War.
The Chriſtian Princeſs to receive your doom,
Is from her Conquer'd *Alexandria* come.
Her Mother in another Veſſel ſent,
A Storm ſurpriz'd; nor know I the event:
Both from your Bounty muſt receive their ſtate;
Or muſt on your Triumphant Chariot wait.
Max. From me they can expect no grace, whoſe minds
An execrable Superſtition blinds.
Apoll. The gods, who rais'd you to the Worlds Command,
Require theſe Victims from your grateful hand.
Por. To minds reſolv'd, the threats of Death are vain;
They run to fires, and there enjoy their pain:
Not *Mucius* made more haſte his hand t'expoſe
To greedy flames, than their whole bodies thoſe.
Max. How, to their own deſtruction, they are blind!
Zeal is the pious madneſs of the mind.
Por. They all our fam'd Philoſophers defie;
And would our Faith by force of Reaſon try.
Apol. I beg it, Sir, by all the Powers Divine,
That in their right this Combat may be mine.
Max. It ſhall; and fifty Doctors of our Laws,
Be added to you, to maintain the Cauſe.

Enter Berenice *the Empreſs*, Valeria *Daughter to the Emperour*, Erotion.

Placid. The Empreſs and your Daughter, Sir, are here.
Por. What dangers in theſe charming Eyes appear!
[*Looking on the Empreſs.*
How my old wounds are open'd at this view!
And in my murd'rers preſence bleed anew!
Max. I did expect your coming to partake [*To the Ladies.*
The general gladneſs which my Triumphs make.
You did *Porphyrius* as a Courtier know,
But as a Conqueror behold him now.

Ber.

Ber. You know (I read it in your bluſhing face) [*To* Por.
To merit, better than receive a grace:
And I know better ſilently to own,
Than with vain words to pay your ſervice done.
Por. Princes, like Gods, reward e're we deſerve;
[*Kneeling to kiſs her hand.*
And pay us in permitting us to ſerve.
Oh might I ſtill grow here, and never move! [*lower.*
Ber. How dangerous are theſe Ecſtaſies of Love!
He ſhows his paſſion to a thouſand Eyes!
He cannot ſtir, nor can I bid him riſe!
That word my heart refuſes to my tongue! [*Aſide.*
Max. Madam, you let the General kneel too long.
Por. Too long, as if Eternity were ſo! [*Aſide.*
Ber. Riſe, good *Porphyrius*, (ſince it muſt be ſo.) [*Aſide.*
Por. Like Hermits, from a Viſion, I retire; [*Riſing.*
With eyes too weak to ſee what I admire. [*Aſide.*
Val. The Empreſs knows your worth; but, Sir, there be
[*To* Porphyrius, *who kiſſes her hand.*
Thoſe who can value it as high as ſhe.
And 'tis but juſt (ſince in my Father's cauſe,
You fought) your Valour ſhould have my Applauſe.
Placid. O Jealouſie, how art thou Eagle-ey'd!
She loves; and would her Love in praiſes hide:
How am I bound this Rival to purſue,
Who raviſhes my Love and Fortune too! [*Aſide.*
[*A dead March within, and Trumpets.*
Max. Somewhat of mournful, ſure, my Ears does wound;
Like the hoarſe murmurs of a Trumpets ſound,
And Drums unbrac'd, with Souldiers broken cries.

Enter Albinus.

Albinus, whence proceeds this diſmal noiſe?
Alb. Too ſoon you'll know what I want words to tell.
Max. How fares my Son? Is my *Charinus* well?
Not anſwer me! Oh my Prophetick fear!
Alb. How can I ſpeak; or how, Sir, can you hear?
Imagine that which you would moſt deplore,
And that which I would ſpeak, is it, or more?
Max. Thy mournful meſſage in thy looks I read:
Is he (Oh that I live to ask it) dead?
Alb. Sir——

Max.

Max. Stay; if thou ſpeak'ſt that word, thou ſpeak'ſt thy laſt:
Some God now, if he dares, relate what's paſt:
Say but he's dead, that God ſhall mortal be.
Alb. Then what I dare not ſpeak, look back and ſee.
[Charinus *born in dead by Souldiers.*]
Max. See nothing, Eyes, henceforth but death and wo,
You've done me the worſt office you can do.
You've ſhown me Deſtinies prepoſt'rous crime;
An unripe Fate; diſclos'd e're Nature's time.
Placid. Aſſwage, great Prince, your paſſion, leſt you ſhow
There's ſomewhat in your Soul which Fate can bow.
Por. Fortune ſhould by your greatneſs be controul'd:
Arm your great mind, and let her take no hold.
Max. To tame Philoſophers teach Conſtancy;
There is no farther uſe of it in me.
Gods (but why name I you!
All that was worth a pray'r to you, is gone:)
I ask not back my Vertue, but my Son.
Alb. His too great thirſt of Fame his ruine brought,
Though, Sir, beyond all humane force he fought.
Placid. This was my Viſion of this fatal day!
Alb. With a fierce haſte he led our Troups the way:
While fiery ſhowr's of Sulphur on him rain'd;
Nor left he, till the Battlements he gain'd:
There with a Forreſt of their Darts he ſtrove;
And ſtood like *Capaneus* defying *Jove.*
With his broad Sword the boldeſt beating down,
While Fate grew pale leſt he ſhould win the Town,
And turn'd the Iron Leaves of its dark Book,
To make new dooms, or mend what it miſtook.
Till ſought by many Deaths, he ſunk, though late,
And by his fall aſſerted doubtful Fate.
Valer. Oh my dear Brother! whom Heaven let us ſee,
And would not longer ſuffer him to be!
Max. And didſt not thou a Death with honour chuſe, [*To* Alb.
But impudently liv'ſt to bring this news?
After his loſs, how didſt thou dare to breath?
——But thy baſe Ghoſt ſhall follow him in death.
A decimation I will ſtrictly make
Of all who my *Charinus* did forſake.
And of each Legion each Centurion
Shall die: —— *Placidius*, ſee my pleaſure done.

Por. Sir, you will loſe by this ſeverity
Your Souldiers hearts.
Max. ——— Why, they take Pay to die.
Por. Then ſpare *Albinus* only.
Max. ——— I conſent
To leave his life to be his puniſhment.
Diſcharg'd from truſt; branded with infamy.
Let him live on, till he ask leave to die.
Ber. Let me petition for him.
Max. ——— I have ſaid;
And will not be intreated, but obey'd,
But, Empreſs, whence does your compaſſion grow?
Ber. You need not ask it, ſince my birth you know.
The Race of *Antonin*'s was nam'd the Good:
I draw my pity from my Royal Blood.
Max. Still muſt I be upbraided with your Line?
I know you ſpeak it in contempt of mine.
But your late Brother did not prize me leſs,
Becauſe I could not boaſt of Images.
And the Gods own'd me more, when they decreed
A Thracian Shepherd ſhould your Line ſucceed.
Ber. The Gods! O do not name the Pow'rs Divine,
They never mingled their Decrees with thine.
My Brother gave me to thee for a Wife,
And for my Dowry thou didſt take his life.
Max. The Gods by many Victories have ſhown,
That they my merits and his death did own.
Ber. Yes: they have own'd it; witneſs this juſt day;
When they begin thy miſchiefs to repay.
See the reward of all thy wicked care,
Before thee thy ſucceſſion ended there.
Yet but in part my Brothers Ghoſt is pleas'd:
Reſtleſs till all the groaning world be eas'd.
For me; no other happineſs I own
Than to have born no Iſſue to thy Throne.
Max. Provoke my rage no farther, leſt I be
Reveng'd at once upon the Gods and thee.
Por. aſide.] What horrid tortures ſeize my lab'ring mind!
O, only excellent of all thy kind!
To hear thee threatned while I idle ſtand:
Heaven! was I born to fear a Tyrants hand?
Max. to Ber.] Hence from my ſight—thy blood, if thou doſt ſtay—
Ber. Tyrant! too well to that thou know'ſt the way. [*Going.*

Por. Let

Por. Let baſer Souls from falling Fortunes flie:
I'll pay my duty to her though I die. [*Exit leading her.*
Max. What made *Porphyrius* ſo officious be?
The action look'd as done in ſcorn of me.
Val. It did, indeed, ſome little freedom ſhow;
But ſomewhat to his ſervices you owe.
Max. Yet if I thought it his preſumption were——
Placid. Perhaps he did not your diſpleaſure hear.
Max. My anger was too loud, not to be heard.
Placid. I'm loth to think he did it not regard.
Max. How, not regard!
Val. Placidius, you foment,
On too light grounds, my Father's diſcontent.
But when an action does two faces wear,
'Tis Juſtice to believe what is moſt fair.
I think, that knowing what reſpect there reſts
For her late Brother in the Souldiers breaſts,
He went to ſerve the Emp'ror: and deſign'd
Only to calm the tempeſt in her mind,
Leſt ſome Sedition in the Camp ſhould riſe.
Max. I ever thought him loyal as he's wiſe.
Since therefore all the Gods their ſpite have ſhown,
To rob my Age of a ſucceſſive Throne;
And you who now remain,
The only Iſſue of my former Bed,
In Empire cannot by your Sex ſucceed:
To bind *Porphyrius* firmly to the State,
I will this day my *Cæſar* him create:
And, Daughter, I will give you him for Wife.
Val. O day, the beſt and happieſt of my life!
Placid. O day, the moſt accurſt I ever knew! [*Aſide.*
Max. See to my Son perform'd each Funeral due:
Then to the toils of War we will return;
And make our Enemies our loſſes mourn. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

The Royal Camp.

Berenice, Porphyrius.

Ber. *Porphyrius*, you too far did tempt your Fate,
In owning her the Emperour does hate.
'Tis true, your Duty to me it became;
But praising that, I must your Conduct blame.
Por. Not to have own'd my zeal at such a time,
Were to sin higher than your Tyrant's crime.
Ber. 'Twas too much my disgrace t'accompany;
A silent wish had been enough for me.
Por. Wishes are aids, faint Servants may supply,
Who ask Heav'n for you what themselves deny.
Could I do less than my respect to pay,
Where I before had giv'n my heart away?
Ber. You fail in that respect you seem to bear,
When you speak words unfit for me to hear.
Por. Yet you did once accept those Vows I paid.
Ber. Those Vows were then to *Berenice* made;
But cannot now be heard without a sin,
When offer'd to the Wife of *Maximin*.
Por. Has, then, the change of Fortune chang'd your Will?
Ah! why are you not *Berenice* still?
To *Maximin* you once declar'd your hate;
Your Marriage was a Sacrifice to th' State:
Your Brother made it to secure his Throne,
Which this man made a step to mount it on.
Ber. Whatever *Maximin* has been, or is,
I am to bear, since Heav'n has made me his.
For Wives, who must themselves of pow'r devest,
When they love blindly, for their peace love best.
Por. If mutual Love be vow'd when Faith you plight,
Then he, who forfeits first, has lost his Right.
Ber. Husbands a forfeiture of Love may make;
But what avails the forfeit none can take?
As in a general Wreck
The Pyrate sinks with his ill-gotten Gains,
And nothing to anothers use remains:

So,

So, by his loſs, no Gain to you can fall;
The Sea, and vaſt deſtruction ſwallows all.
Por. Yet he, who from the Shore the Wreck deſcries,
May lawfully enrich him with the Prize.
Ber. Who ſees the Wreck, can yet no Title plead,
Till he be ſure the Owner firſt is dead.
Por. If that be all the claim I want to love,
This Pyrate of your heart I'll ſoon remove;
And, at one ſtroke, the World and you ſet free.
Ber. Leave to the care of Heav'n that World and me.
Por. Heav'n, as its Inſtrument, my Courage ſends.
Ber. Heav'n ne'r ſent thoſe who fight for private ends.
We both are bound by truſt, and muſt be true;
I to his Bed, and to his Empire you.
For he who to the bad betrays his truſt,
Though he does good, becomes himſelf unjuſt.
Por. When *Brutus* did from *Cæſar Rome* redeem,
The Act was good.
Ber. ——— But 'twas not good in him.
You ſee the Gods adjudg'd it Parricide,
By dooming the Event on *Cæſar*'s ſide.
'Tis Vertue not to be oblig'd at all;
Or not conſpire our Benefactor's Fall.
Por. You doom me then to ſuffer all this ill,
And yet I doom my ſelf to love you ſtill.
Ber. Dare not *Porphyrius* ſuffer then with me,
Since what for him I for my ſelf decree?
Por. How can I bear thoſe griefs you diſapprove?
Ber. To eaſe 'em, I'll permit you ſtill to love.
Por. That will but haſte my death, if you think fit
Not to reward, but barely to permit.
Love without hope does like a torture wound,
Which makes me reach in pain to touch the Ground.
Ber. If hope, then, to your life ſo needful be,
Hope ſtill.
Por. ———Bleſs'd News!
Ber. ———But hope, in Heav'n, not me.
Por. Love is too noble ſuch deceits to uſe,
Referring me to Heav'n, your gift I loſe,
So Princes cheaply may our wants ſupply,
When they give that their Treaſurers deny.
Ber. Love blinds my Vertue: if I longer ſtay,
It will grow dark, and I ſhall loſe my way.

Por. One kiſs from this fair hand can be no ſin;
I ask not that you gave to *Maximin.*
In full reward of all the pains I've paſt,
Give me but one.
Ber. —— Then let it be your laſt.
Por. 'Tis gone!
Like Souldiers prodigal of their Arrears,
One minute ſpends the Pay of many years.
—— Let but one more be added to the ſumm,
And pay at once for all my pains to come.
Ber. Unthrifts will ſtarve if we before-hand give: [*pulling back her hand.*
I'll ſee you ſhall have juſt enough to live.

Enter Erotion.

Ero. Madam, the Emperour is drawing near;
And comes, they ſay, to ſeek *Porphyrius* here.
Ber. Alas!
Por. —— I will not ask what he intends;
My Life, or Death, alone, on you depends.
Ber. I muſt withdraw; but muſt not let him know [*Aſide.*
How hard the Precepts of my Virtue grow!
But what e'r Fortune is for me deſign'd,
Sweet Heav'n, be ſtill to brave *Porphyrius* kind! [*Exit cum* Erotio.
Por. She's gone unkindly, and refus'd to caſt
One glance to feed me for ſo long a Faſt.

Enter Maximin, Placidius, *Guards.*

Max. Porphyrius, ſince the Gods have raviſh'd one,
I come in you to ſeek another Son.
Succeed him then in my Imperial ſtate;
Succeed in all, but his untimely fate.
If I adopt you with no better grace,
Pardon a Father's Tears, upon my Face,
And give e'm to *Charinus* memory:
May they not prove as ominous to thee.
Por. With what misfortunes Heav'n torments me ſtill!
Why muſt I be oblig'd to one ſo ill? [*Aſide.*
Max. Thoſe offers which I made you, Sir, were ſuch,
No private man ſhould need to ballance much.
Por. Who durſt his thoughts to ſuch ambition lift? [*Kneeling.*
The greatneſs of it made me doubt the gift.

The distance was so vast, that to my view
It made the object seem at first untrue:
And now 'tis near, the sudden excellence
Strikes through, and flashes on my tender sence.
Max. Yet Heav'n and Earth, which so remote appear [*raising him.*
Are by the Air, which flows betwixt 'em, near.
And 'twixt us two, my Daughter be the Chain,
One end with me, and one with you remain.
Por. You press me down with such a glorious Fate, [*Kneeling again.*
I cannot rise against the mighty weight.
Permit I may retire some little space,
And gather strength to bear so great a grace. [*Exit bowing.*
Placid. How Love and Fortune lavishly contend,
Which should *Porphyrius* wishes most befriend!
The midstream's his; I, creeping by the side,
Am shoulder'd off by his impetuous Tide. [*Aside.*

Enter Valerius *hastily.*

Val. I hope my business may my haste excuse;
For, Sir, I bring you most surprizing news.
The Christian Princess in her Tent confers
With fifty of your learn'd Philosophers;
Whom with such Eloquence she does perswade,
That they are Captives to her reasons made.
I left 'em yielding up their vanquish'd Cause,
And all the Souldiers shouting her applause;
Ev'n *Apollonius* does but faintly speak,
Whose Voice the murmurs of th' assistants break.
Max. Conduct this Captive Christian to my Tent;
She shall be brought to speedy punishment.
I must in time some remedy provide, [*Exit* Valerius.
Lest this contagious Errour spread too wide.
Placid. T' infected Zeal you must no mercy show:
For, from Religion, all Rebellions grow.
Max. The silly crowd, by factious Teachers, brought
To think that Faith untrue their youth was taught,
Run on in new Opinions blindly bold;
Neglect, contemn, and then assault the old.
Th' infectious madness seizes every part,
And from the head distills upon the heart.
And first, they think their Prince's Faith not true,
And then proceed to offer him a new;

Which

Which if refus'd, all duty from 'em caſt,
To their new Faith, they make new Kings at laſt.
Placid. Thoſe ills by Male-contents are often wrought,
That by their Prince their duty may be bought.
They head thoſe holy Factions which they hate,
To ſell their duty at a dearer rate.
But, Sir, the Tribune is already here
With your fair Captive.
Max. ——— Bid 'em both appear.
Enter S. Catharine, Valerius, Apollonius, *Guards.*
See where ſhe comes with that high Air and Meen,
Which marks in Bonds, the greatneſs of a Queen.
What pity 'tis! ——— but I no charms muſt ſee
In her, who to our Gods is enemy.———
Fair Foe of Heav'n, whence comes this haughty pride, [*To her.*
Or is it Frenzy does your mind miſguide
To ſcorn our Worſhip, and new Gods to find?
S. Cath. Nor pride, nor frenzy, but a ſetled mind;
Enlightened from above, my way does mark.
Max. Though Heav'n be clear, the way to it is dark.
S. Cath. But where our Reaſon with our Faith does go,
We're both above enlightned, and below.
But Reaſon with your fond Religion fights,
For many Gods are many Infinites:
This to the firſt Philoſophers was known,
Who, under various names, ador'd but one.
Though your vain Poets after did miſtake,
Who ev'ry Attribute a God did make.
And ſo obſcene their Ceremonies be,
As good men loath, and *Cato* bluſh'd to ſee.
Max. War is my Province; Prieſt, why ſtand you mute?
You gain by Heav'n, and therefore ſhould diſpute.
Apol. In all Religions, as in ours, there are
Some ſolid truths, and ſome things popular.
The popular in pleaſing Fables lye,
The Truths in precepts of Morality.
And theſe to humane life are of that uſe,
That no Religion can ſuch Rules produce.
S. Cath. Then let the whole diſpute concluded be
Betwixt theſe Rules and Chriſtianity.
Apol. And what more noble can your Doctrine preach,
Than Virtues which Philoſophy does teach?
To keep the paſſions in ſevereſt awe,
To live to Reaſon (Nature's greateſt Law)

To follow Vertue is its own reward;
And good and ill, as things without, regard.
S. Cath. Yet few could follow those strict Rules they gave;
For humane Life will humane frailties have:
And love of Vertue is but barren praise,
Airy as Fame; nor strong enough to raise
The actions of the Soul above the sence.
Vertue grows cold without a recompence.
We vertuous Acts as Duty do regard;
Yet are permitted to expect reward.
Apol. By how much more your Faith reward assures,
So much more frank our Vertue is than yours.
S. Cath. Blind men! you seek even those rewards you blame:
But ours are solid, yours an empty name.
Either to open praise your Acts you guide,
Or else reward your selves with secret pride.
Apol. Yet still our Moral Vertues you obey:
Ours are the Precepts, though apply'd your way.
S. Cath. 'Tis true, your Riches are the same we teach;
But in our practice they much higher reach.
You but forbid to take anothers due;
But we forbid even to desire it too.
Revenge of Injuries you Vertue call,
But we forgiveness of our wrongs extoll:
Immodest Deeds you hinder to be wrought,
But we proscribe the least immodest thought.
So much your Vertues are in ours refin'd,
That yours but reach the Actions, ours the mind.
Max. Answer in short to what you heard her speak. [*To* Apol.
Apol. Where Truth prevails, all Arguments are weak,
To that convincing power I must give place:
And with that Truth, that Faith I will embrace.
Max. O Traytor to our Gods, but more to me;
Dar'st thou of any Faith, but of thy Prince's be?
But sure thou rav'st; thy foolish errour find:
Cast up the poison that infects thy mind;
And shun the torments thou art sure to feel.
Apol. Nor fire, nor torture, nor revenging Steel
Can on my Soul the least Impression make:
How gladly, Truth, I suffer for thy sake!
Once I was ignorant of what was so;
But never can abandon Truth I know:
My Martyrdom I to thy Crown prefer;
Truth is a Cause for a Philosopher.

S. Cath. Loſe not that Courage which Heav'n does inſpire;
[*To* Apollonius.
But fearleſs go to be baptiz'd in fire.
Think 'tis a Triumph, not a danger near:
Give him your Blood; but give him not a tear.
Go, and prepare my Seat: and hovering be
Near that bright ſpace which is reſerv'd for me.
Max. Hence with the Traytor; bear him to his Fate.
Apol. Tyrant, I fear thy pity, not thy hate:
A Life Eternal I by Death obtain.
Max. Go, carry him, where he that life may gain.
Exeunt Apollonius, Valerius *and Guards.*
Placid. From ths Enchantreſs all theſe ills are come:
You are not ſafe till you pronounce her doom.
Each hour ſhe lives a Legion ſweeps away;
She'll make your Army Martyrs in a day.
Max. 'Tis juſt: this Chriſtian Sorcereſs ſhall dye:
(Would I had never prov'd her Sorcery:)
Not that her charming tongue this change has bred;
I fear 'tis ſomething that her eyes have fed.
I love: and am aſham'd it ſhould be ſeen. [*Aſide.*
Placid. Sir, ſhall ſhe dye?
Max. ——— Conſider ſhe's a Queen.
Placid. Thoſe Claims in *Cleopatra* ended were.
Max. How many *Cleopatra's* live in her? [*Aſide.*
Placid. When you condemn'd her, Sir, ſhe was a Queen.
Max. No, Slave; ſhe only was a Captive then.
S. Cath. My joyful Sentence you defer too long.
Max. I never knew that Life was ſuch a wrong.
But if you needs will dye, ——it ſhall be ſo.
——Yet think it does from your perverſeneſs flow.
Men ſay, indeed, that I in Blood delight;
But you ſhall find—— Haſte, take her from my ſight.
——For *Maximin* I have too much confeſs'd:
And for a Lover not enough expreſs'd.
Abſent, I may her Martyrdom decree;
But one look more will make that Martyr me. *Exit. S.* Cath. *guarded.*
Placid. What is it, Sir, that ſhakes your mighty mind?
Max. Somewhat I am aſham'd that thou ſhould'ſt find.
Placid. If it be love which does your Soul poſſeſs———
Max. Are you my Rival, that ſo ſoon you gueſs?
Placid. Far, mighty Prince, be ſuch a Crime from me, [*Kneeling.*
Which, with the pride, includes impiety.

Could

Could you forgive it, yet the Gods above
Would never pardon me a Chriſtian Love.
Max. Thou li'ſt —— there's not a God inhabits there,
But for this Chriſtian would all Heav'n forſwear.
Ev'n *Jove* would try more ſhapes her Love to win:
And in new Birds, and unknown Beaſts would ſin:
At leaſt, if *Jove* could Love like *Maximin.*
Placid. A Captive, Sir, who would a Martyr die?
Max. She courts not Death, but ſhuns Captivity.
Great gifts, and greater promiſes I'll make;
And what Religion is't, but they can ſhake?
She ſhall live high: Devotion in diſtreſs
Is born, but vaniſhes in happineſs. [*Exit* Maximin.
Placid. ſolus. His Son forgot, his Empreſs unappeas'd;
How ſoon the Tyrant with new Love is ſeiz'd!
Love, various minds, does variouſly inſpire:
He ſtirs in gentle Natures, gentle fire;
Like that of Incenſe on the Altars laid:
But raging flames tempeſtuous Souls invade.
A fire which every windy paſſion blows;
With pride it mounts, and with revenge it glows.
But I accurs'd who ſervilely muſt move;
And ſooth his paſſion for his Daughters Love!
Small hope, 'tis true, attends my mighty care.
But of all paſſions, Love does laſt deſpair. [*Exit.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

The Royal Pavillion.

Maximin, Placidius, *Guards and Attendants.*

Max. THis Love that never could my youth engage,
Peeps out his Coward Head to dare my age,
Where haſt thou been thus long, thou ſleeping form,
That wak'ſt like drowſie Sea-men in a ſtorm?
A ſullen hour thou chuſeſt for thy Birth:
My Love ſhoots up in Tempeſts, as the Earth
Is ſtirr'd and looſen'd in a bluſt'ring Wind,
Whoſe blaſts to waiting Flowers her Womb unbind.
Placid. Forgive me, if I ſay your paſſions are
So rough, as if in Love you would make War.

But Love is soft———
And with soft beauty tenderly complies;
In Lips it laughs, and languishes in Eyes.
Max. There let it laugh; or, like an Infant weep:
I cannot such a supple passion keep.
Mine, stiff with Age, and stubborn as my Arms,
Walks upright; stoops not to, but meets her Charms.
Placid. Yet fierceness suits not with her gentle kind;
They brave Assaults; but may be undermin'd.
Max. Till I in those mean Arts am better read,
Court thou, and fawn, and flatter in my stead.
Enter S. Catharine.
She comes; and now, methinks, I could obey:
Her Form glides through me, and my heart gives way:
This Iron heart, which no impression took
From Wars, melts down and runs, if she but look. [*Exit* Maximin.
Placid. Madam, I from the Emperor am come
T' applaud your Vertue, and reverse your Doom.
He thinks, whatever your Religion be,
This Palm is owing to your constancy.
S. Cath. My constancy from him seeks no Renown;
Heav'n, that propos'd the Course, will give the Crown.
Placid. But Monarchs are the Gods Vicegerents here;
Heav'n gives rewards; but what it gives they bear:
From Heaven to you th' Ægyptian Crown is sent,
Yet 'tis a Prince who does the Gift present.
S. Cath. The Deity I serve, had he thought fit,
Could have preserv'd my Crown unconquer'd yet:
But when his secret Providence design'd
To level that, he levell'd too my mind;
Which, by contracting its desires, is taught
The humble quiet of possessing nought.
Placid. To Stoicks leave a happiness so mean:
Your Vertue does deserve a nobler Scene.
You are not for obscurity design'd:
But, like the Sun, must cheer all humane kind.
S. Cath. No happiness can be where is no rest:
Th' unknown, untalk'd of man is only blest.
He, as in some safe Cliff, his Cell does keep,
From thence he views the labours of the Deep:
The Gold-fraught Vessel which mad Tempests beat,
He sees now vainly make to his retreat:
And, when from far, the tenth Wave does appear,
Shrinks up in silent joy that he's not there.

Placid.

Placid. You have a Pilot who your Ship ſecures;
The Monarch both of Earth and Seas is yours.
He who ſo freely gives a Crown away,
Yet asks no Tribute but what you may pay.
One ſmile on him a greater wealth beſtows,
Than *Ægypt* yields, when *Nilus* overflows.
S. Cath. I cannot wholly innocent appear,
Since I have liv'd ſuch words as theſe to hear.
O Heav'n, which doſt of chaſtity take care! ——
Placid. Why do you loſe an unregarded Pray'r?
If happineſs, as you believe, be reſt,
That quiet ſure is by the Gods poſſeſt: ——
'Tis greatneſs to neglect, or not to know
The little buſineſs of the World below.
S. Cath. This Doctrine well-befitted him, who thought
A caſual World was from wild Atomes wrought:
But ſuch an Order in each chance we ſee,
(Chain'd to its Cauſe, as that to its Decree,)
That none can think a Workmanſhip ſo rare,
Was built or kept without a Workman's care.

[*To them* Maximin, *Attendants and Guards.*

Max. Madam, you from *Placidius* may have heard
Some News, which will your happineſs regard.
For what a greater happineſs can be,
Than to be courted and be lov'd by me?
Th' Egyptian Crown I to your hands remit;
And, with it, take his heart who offers it. [*She turns aſide.*
Do you my Perſon and my Gift contemn?
S. Cath. My hopes purſue a brighter Diadem.
Max. Can any brighter than the *Roman* be?
I find my proffer'd Love has cheapen'd me:
Since you neglect to anſwer my deſires,
Know, Princes, you ſhall burn in other Fires.
——Why ſhould you urge me to ſo black a deed?
Think all my anger did from Love proceed.
S. Cath. Nor threats, nor promiſes my mind can move:
Your furious anger, nor your impious Love.
Max. The Love of you can never impious be;
You are ſo pure——
That in the Act 'twould change th' impiety.
Heav'n would unmake it ſin——
S. Cath. I take my ſelf from thy deteſted ſight:
To my reſpect thou haſt no longer right:

Such

Such pow'r in Bonds true Piety can have,
That I command, and thou art but a Slave. [*Exit.* S. Cath.

Max. To what a height of arrogance she swells!
Pride or ill Nature still with Virtue dwells;
— But is her Death within a Lovers pow'r?
Wild with my rage, more wild with my desire,
Like meeting Tides — but mine are tides of fire.
What petty promise was't that caus'd this frown?

Placid. You heard: no less than the Ægyptian Crown.

Max. Throw *Ægypt*'s by, and offer in the stead;
Offer — the Crown on *Berenice*'s Head.
I am resolv'd to double till I win;
About it straight, and send *Porphyrius* in. [*Exit* Placid.
We look like Eagles tow'ring in the Sky;
While her high flight still raises mine more high.

To him Porphyrius.

Por. I come, Sir, to expect your great commands.

Max. My happiness lies only in thy hands.
And, since I have adopted thee my Son,
I'll keep no Secret from thy Breast unknown;
Led by the int'rest of my rising Fate,
I did espouse this Empress whom I hate:
And therefore with less shame I may declare,
That I the Fetters of thy Captive wear.

Por. Sir, you amaze me with so strange a Love.

Max. Pity, my Son, those flames you disapprove.
The cause of Love can never be assign'd;
'Tis in no Face, but in the Lovers mind.

Por. Yet there are Beauties which attract all Hearts;
And all Mankind lies open to their Darts,
Whose Soveraignty, without dispute, we grant;
Such Graces, sure, your Empress does not want.

Max. Beauty has bounds, ———
And can no more to every Heart be so,
Than any Coin through every Land can go.
Some secret Grace, which is but so to me,
Though not so great, may yet more pow'rful be:
All guard themselves when stronger Foes invade; —
Yet, by the weak, surprizes may be made:
But you, my Son, are not to judge, but aid.

Por. What is it, Sir, you can require of me?

Max. I would from *Berenice*'s Bonds be free;

This

This Yoke of Marriage from us both remove,
Where two are bound to draw, though neither Love.
Por. Neither the Gods nor Man will give consent,
To put in practise your unjust intent.
Max. Both must consent to that which I decree.
Por. The Souldiers love her Brother's memory;
And for her sake some Mutiny will stir.
Max. Our parting therefore —— shall be sought by her.
Go, bid her sue for a Divorce, or die;
I'll cut the knot, if she will not unty:
Haste to prepare her, and thy self return;
Thy *Hymen*'s Torch this day with mine shall burn. [*Exit.*
Por. Rather my Funeral Torch; —— for though I know
Valeria's fair, and that she loves me too.
'Gainst her my Soul is arm'd on every part:
Yet there are secret Rivets to my heart;
Where *Berenice*'s Charms have found the way;
Subtile as Lightnings, but more fierce than they.
How shall I this avoid, or gain that Love!
So near the Rock, I to the Port must move.

To him, Valeria *attended.*

Val. Porphyrius, now my joy I may express,
Nor longer hide the Love I must possess.
Should I have staid till Marriage made us one,
You might have thought it was by duty done;
But of my Heart I now a Present make;
And give it you ere it be yours to take.
Accept it as when early fruit we send:
And let the rareness the small gift commend.
Por. Great Monarchs, like your Father, often give
What is above a Subject to receive:
But faithful Officers should countermand,
And stop the gift that passes through their hand:
And to their Prince, that mass of wealth restore,
Which lavish'd thus, would make whole Nations poor.
Val. But to this gift, a double right you have:
My Father gives but what before I gave.
Por. In vain you such unequal Presents make,
Which I still want capacity to take.
Such fatal bounty once the *Gauls* did show;
They threw their Rings, but threw their Targets too.
Bounty so plac'd, does more like ruine look;
You pour the Ocean on a narrow Brook.

Val.

Val. Yet if your Love before prepares a Boat,
The ſtream ſo pour'd, drowns not, but makes it float.
Por. But when the Veſſel is on Quick-ſands caſt,
The flowing Tide does more the ſinking haſt.
Val. And on what Quick ſands can your heart be thrown?
Can you a Love beſides *Valeria*'s own?
Por. If he who at your Feet his Heart would lay,
Be met with firſt, and robb'd upon the way.
You may indeed the Robbers ſtrength accuſe,
But pardon him who did the Preſent loſe.
Val. Who is this Thief that does my right poſſeſs?
Name her, and then we of her ſtrength may gueſs ——
From whence does your unwonted ſilence come?
Por. She bound and gagg'd me, and has left me dumb.
Val. But of my wrongs I will aloud complain:
Falſe man, thou would'ſt excuſe thy ſelf in vain:
For thee I did a Maidens bluſh forſake;
And own'd a Love thou haſt refus'd to take.
Por. Refus'd it! —— like a Miſer midſt his ſtore,
Who graſps, and graſps, till he can hold no more;
And when his ſtrength is wanting to his mind,
Looks back, and ſighs on what he left behind.
Val. No, I reſume that heart thou didſt poſſeſs;
My Father ſhall my injuries redreſs:
With me thou loſeſt his Imperial Crown,
And ſpeedy Death attends upon his frown.
Por. You may revenge your wrongs a nobler way;
Command my Death, and I will ſoon obey.
Val. No, live; for on thy Life my Cure depends:
In Debtors Deaths all obligation ends:
'Twill be ſome eaſe ungrateful thee to call;
And Bankrupt-like, ſay, Truſting him loſt all.
Por. Upbraided thus, what gen'rous man would live!
But Fortune will revenge what you forgive.
When I refuſe; (as in few hours I muſt)
This offer'd grace, your Father will be juſt.
Val. Be juſt! ſay rather he will cruel prove,
To kill that only perſon I can love.
Yet ſo it is! ——
Your int'reſt in the Army is ſo high;
That he muſt make you his, or you muſt die!
It is reſolv'd! who e'r my Rival be, [*Aſide after a pauſe.*
I'll ſhow that I deſerve him more than ſhe.

And

And if at last he does ingrateful prove,
My constancy it self rewards my Love. [*Exit.*

Por. She's gone, and gazing round about, I see
Nothing but death, or glorious misery;
Here Empire stands, if I could Love displace;
There, hopeless Love, with more Imperial Grace;
Thus as a sinking Hero compass'd round,
Beckons his bravest Foe for his last wound,
And him into his part of Fame does call,
I'll turn my face to Love, and there I'll fall.

To him Berenice, Erotion.

Ber. I come, *Porphyrius*, to congratulate
This happy change of your exalted Fate:
You to the Empire are, I hear, design'd
And fair *Valeria* must th' Alliance bind.

Por. Would Heav'n had my succession so decreed,
That I in all might *Maximin* succeed!
He offers me th' Imperial Crown, 'tis true:
I would succeed him, but it is in you.

Ber. In me! I never did accept your Love;
But you, I see, would handsomly remove:
And I can give you leave without a frown:
I always thought you merited a Crown.

Por. I never sought that Crown but on your Brow;
But you with such indiff'rence would allow
My change, that you have kill'd me with that breath:
I feel your scorn cold as the hand of death.

Ber. You'll come to life in your *Valeria*'s arms:
'Tis true, I cannot boast of equal charms;
Or if I could, I never did admit
Your Love to me, but only suffer'd it.
I am a Wife, and can make no return;
And 'twere but vain, in hopeless fires to burn.

Por. Unkind! can you, whom only I adore,
Set open to your Slave the Prison-door?
You use my heart just as you would afford
A fatal freedom to some harmless Bird,
Whom, breeding, you ne'r taught to seek its food;
And now let flie to perish in the Wood.

Ber. Then, if you will love on, and disobey,
And lose an Empire for my sake, you may.
Will a kind look from me pay all this score,
For you well know you must expect no more?

Por. All I deſerve it will, not all I wiſh:
But I will brave the Tyrants rage for this.
If I refuſe, my death muſt needs enſue;
But you ſhall ſee that I dare die for you.
Ber. Would you for me,
A Beauty, and an Empire too deny?
I love you now ſo well —— that you ſhall die,
Die mine; 'tis all I can with honour give:
Nor ſhould you die, if after, I would live.
But when your Marriage and your death I view,
That makes you falſe, but this will keep you true.
Por. Unbind thy brows, and look abroad to ſee,
O mighty Love, thy mightieſt Victory!
Ber. And yet —— is there no other way to try?
'Tis hard to ſay I love, and let you die.
Por. Yes, there remains ſome help, which you might give,
If you, as I would die for Love, would live.
Ber. If death for Love be ſweet, ſure life is more:
Teach me the means your ſafety to reſtore.
Por. Your Tyrant the Ægyptian Princeſs loves;
And to that heighth his ſwelling paſſion moves,
That, fearing in your death the Souldiers force,
He from your Bed does ſtudy a Divorce.
Ber. Th' Ægyptian Princeſs I diſputing heard,
And as a Miracle her mind regard.
But yet I wiſh that this Divorce be true. [*Gives her hand.*
Por. 'Tis, Madam, but it muſt be ſought by you.
By this he will all Mutinies prevent;
And this, as well, ſecures your own content.
Ber. I hate this Tyrant, and his Bed I loath;
But, once ſubmitting, I am ti'd to both:
Ti'd to that Honour, which all Women owe,
Though not their Husbands perſon, yet their vow.
Something ſo Sacred in that Bond there is,
That none ſhould think there could be ought amiſs:
And if there be, we ſhould in ſilence hide
Thoſe faults, which blame our choice when they are ſpi'd.
Por. But, ſince to all the world his crimes are known,
And, by himſelf the Civil War's begun,
Would you th'advantage of the fight delay,
If, ſtriking firſt, you were to win the day?
Ber. I would, like Jews upon their Sabbath, fall:
And, rather than ſtrike firſt, not ſtrike at all.

Por. Againſt your ſelf you ſadly propheſie:
You either this Divorce muſt ſeek, or die.
Ber. Then death from all my griefs ſhall ſet me free.
Por. And would you rather chuſe your death, than me.
Ber. My earthy part ———
Which is my Tyrants right, death will remove,
I'll come all Soul and Spirit to your Love.
With ſilent ſteps I'll follow you all day;
Or elſe before you, in the Sun-beams, play.
I'll lead you thence to melancholy Groves,
And there repeat the Scenes of our paſt Loves.
At night, I will within your Curtains peep;
With empty arms embrace you while you ſleep.
In gentle dreams I often will be by;
And ſweep along, before your cloſing eye.
All dangers from your Bed I will remove;
But guard it moſt from any future Love.
And when at laſt, in pity you will die:
I'll watch your Birth of Immortality:
Then, Turtle-like, I'll to my Mate repair;
And teach you your firſt flight in open Air. [*Exit* Berenice *cum* Erotio.
Por. She has but done what Honour did require:
Nor can I blame that Love, which I admire.
But then her death!
I'll ſtand betwixt, it firſt ſhall pierce my heart:
We will be ſtuck together on his dart.
But yet the danger not ſo high does grow:
I'll charge death firſt, perhaps repulſe him too.
But, if o'r-pow'rd, I muſt be over-come;
Forc'd back, I'll fight each inch into my Tomb. [*Exit.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Indian Cave.

Placidius, Nigrinus. Nigrinus *with two drawn Swords, held upwards in his hands.*

Placid. ALL other means have fail'd to move her heart;
Our laſt recourſe is therefore to your Art.
Nig. Of Wars, and Bloodſhed, and of dire Events,
Of Fates, and fighting Kings, their Inſtruments,

I could with greater certainty foretel;
Love only does in doubts and darkneſs dwell:
For, like a Wind, it in no quarter ſtays;
But points and veers each hour a thouſand ways.
On Women Love depends, and they on Will;
Chance turns their Orb, while Deſtiny ſits ſtill.
Placid. Leave nothing unattempted in your pow'r:
Remember you oblige an Emperour.
Nig. An earthy Fiend by compact me obeys;
But him to light intents I muſt not raiſe.
Some Aſtral forms I muſt invoke by pray'r,
Fram'd all of pureſt Atoms of the Air;
Not in their Natures ſimply good or ill;
But moſt ſubſervient to bad Spirits will.
Nakar of thoſe does lead the mighty Band,
For eighty Legions move at his Command:
Gentle to all, but far above the reſt,
Mild *Nakar* loves his ſoft *Damilcar* beſt.
In Aery Chariots they together ride;
And ſip the Dew as through the Clouds they glide:
Theſe are the Spirits which in Love have pow'r.
Placid. Haſte, and invoke 'em in a happy hour.
Nig. And ſo it proves: for, counting ſev'n from Noon,
'Tis *Venus* hour, and in the wexing Moon.
With Chalk I firſt deſcribe a Circle here,
Where theſe Ætherial Spirits muſt appear.
Come in, come in; for here they will be ſtrait:
Around, around, the place I fumigate:
My fumigation is to *Venus*, juſt:
The Souls of Roſes, and red Corals duſt:
A lump of *Sperma Ceti*; and to theſe
The ſtalks and chips of *Lignum Aloes.*
And, laſt, to make my fumigation good,
'Tis mixt with Sparrows brains, and Pigeons blood.
Nigrinus *takes up the Swords.*
They come, they come, they come! I hear 'em now.
Placid. A death-like damp ſits cold upon my brow:
And miſty vapours ſwim before my ſight.
Nig. They come not in a ſhape to cauſe your fright.

Nakar *and* Damilcar *deſcend in Clouds, and ſing.*

Nakar. *Heark, my* Damilcar, *we are call'd below!*
Dam. *Let us go, let us go!*
Go to relieve the care
Of longing Lovers in deſpair!

Nakar.

Nakar. *Merry, merry, merry, we ſail from the Eaſt,*
Half tipled at a Rain-bow Feaſt.
Dam. *In the bright Moon-ſhine, while winds whiſtle loud,*
Tivy, tivy, tivy, we mount and we fly,
All racking along in a downy white Cloud:
And leſt our leap from the Skie ſhould prove too far,
We ſlide on the back of a new falling Star.
Nakar. *And drop from above,*
In a Gelly of Love!
Dam. *But now the Sun's down, and the Element's red,*
The Spirits of Fire againſt us make head!
Nakar. *They muſter, they muſter, like Gnats in the Air:*
Alas! I muſt leave thee, my Fair;
And to my light Horſe-men repair.
Dam. *O ſtay, for you need not to fear 'em to night;*
The wind is for us, and blows full in their ſight:
And o'r the wide Ocean we fight!
Like leaves in the Autumn our Foes will fall down;
And hiſs in the water ———
Both. *And hiſs in the Water, and drown!*
Nakar. *But their men lie ſecurely intrench'd in a Cloud:*
And a Trumpeter-Hornet to Battel ſounds loud.
Dam. *Now Mortals that ſpie*
How we tilt in the Skie
With wonder will gaze;
And fear ſuch events as will ne'r come to paſs!
Nakar. *Stay you to perform what the man will have done.*
Dam. *Then call me again when the Battel is won.*
Both. *So ready and quick is a Spirit of Air*
To pity the Lover, and ſuccour the fair,
That, ſilent and ſwift, that little ſoft God,
Is here with a wiſh, and is gone with a nod.
The Clouds part, Nakar *flies up, and* Damilcar *down.*

Nig. I charge thee, Spirit, ſtay; and by the pow'r [*To* Damil.
Of *Nakar*'s Love, and of this holy Wand.
On the North quarter of my Circle ſtand.
(Sev'n foot around for my defence I take!)
To all my queſtions faithful anſwers make;
So may'ſt thou live thy thouſand years in peace,
And ſee thy Aery Progeny increaſe:
So may'ſt thou ſtill continue young and fair,
Fed by the blaſt of pure Ætherial Air.

And, thy full term expir'd, without all pain,
Dissolve into thy Astral Source again.
Dam. Name not my hated Rival *Gemory*,
And I'll speak true what e'r thy questions be.
Nig. Thy Rival's hated name I will refrain:
Speak, shall the Emperour his Love obtain?
Dam. Few hours shall pass before your Emperour shall be
Possess'd of that he loves, or from that love be free.
Placid. Shall I enjoy that Beauty I adore?
Dam. She Suppliant-like, e'r long, thy succour shall implore:
And thou with her thou lov'st in happiness may'st live:
If she not dies before, who all thy joys can give.
Nig. Say, what does the Ægyptian Princess now?
Dam. A gentle slumber sits upon her brow.
Nig. Go, stand before her in a golden dream;
Set all the pleasures of the World to show,
And in vain joys let her loose Spirit flow.
Dam. Twice fifty Tents remove her from your sight,
But I'll cut through 'em all with rays of light:——
And covering other objects to your Eyes,
Show where intranc'd in silent sleep she lies.

Damilcar *stamps, and the Bed arises with* St. Catharine *in it.*

Dam. singing. *You pleasing Dreams of Love and sweet delight,*
Appear before this slumbring Virgins sight:
Soft Visions set her free
From mournful piety.
Let her sad thoughts from Heav'n retire;
And let the melancholy Love
Of those remoter joys above
Give place to your more sprightly fire.
Let purling Streams be in her fancy seen;
And flow'ry Meads, and Vales of cheerful Green
And in the midst of deathless Groves
Soft sighing wishes ly,
And smiling hopes fast by,
And just beyond 'em ever-laughing Loves.

A Scene of a Paradise *is discovered.*

Placid. Some pleasing Objects do her mind employ;
For on her face I read a wandring joy.

SONG

SONG.

Dam. *Ah how ſweet it is to love,*
Ah how gay is young deſire!
And what pleaſing pains we prove
When we firſt approach Loves fire!
Pains of Love be ſweeter far
Than all other pleaſures are.

Sighs which are from Lovers blown,
Do but gently heave the Heart:
Ev'n the Tears they ſhed alone
Cure, like trickling Balm their ſmart.
Lovers when they loſe their breath,
Bleed away in eaſy Death.

Love and Time with reverence uſe,
Treat 'em like a parting Friend:
Nor the golden gifts refuſe
Which in youth ſincere they ſend:
For each Year their price is more,
And they leſs ſimple than before.

Love, like Spring-Tides full and high,
Swells in every youthful vein:
But each Tide does leſs ſupply,
Till they quite ſhrink in again:
If a flow in age appear,
'Tis but rain, and runs not clear.

At the end of the Song, a Dance of Spirits. After which Amariel, *the Guardian-Angel of* St. Catharine, *deſcends to ſoft Muſick, with a flaming Sword. The Spirits crawl off the Stage amazedly, and* Damilcar *runs to a Corner of it.*

Amar. From the bright Empire of Eternal Day,
Where waiting minds for Heav'ns Commiſſion ſtay,
Amariel flies: (a darted Mandate came
From that great Will which moves this mighty frame,
Bid me to thee, my Royal Charge, repair,
To guard thee from the Dæmons of the Air;
My flaming Sword, above 'em to diſplay,
(All keen and ground upon the edge of day;)

The

The flat to sweep the Visions from thy mind,
The edge to cut 'em through that stay behind.)
Vain Spirits, you that shunning Heav'ns high noon,
Swarm here beneath the concave of the Moon,
What folly, or what rage your duty blinds,
To violate the sleep of holy minds?
Hence to the task assign'd you here below:
Upon the Ocean make loud tempests blow:
Into the wombs of hollow Clouds repair,
And crush out Thunder from the bladder'd Air.
From pointed Sun-beams take the Mists they drew,
And scatter 'em again in pearly dew:
And of the bigger drops they drain below,
Some mould in Hail, and others stamp in Snow.
Dam. Mercy, bright Spirit, I already feel:
The piercing edge of thy immortal steel:
Thou, Prince of day, from Elements Art free;
And I all body when compar'd to thee.
Thou tread'st th' Abyss of light!
And where it streams with open eyes canst go:
We wander in the Fields of Air below:
Changlings and Fools of Heav'n: and thence shut out,
Wildly we roam in discontent about:
Gross-heavy-fed, next man in ignorance and sin,
And spotted all without, and dusky all within.
Without thy Sword I perish by thy sight,
I reel, and stagger, and am drunk with light.
Ama. If e'r again thou on this place art found;
Full fifty years I'll chain thee under ground;
The damps of Earth shall be thy daily food;
All swoln and bloated like a dungeon toad:
And when thou shalt be freed, yet thou shalt ly
Gasping upon the ground, too faint to fly;
And lag below thy fellows in the sky.
Dam. O pardon, pardon, this accursed Deed,
And I no more on Magick fumes will feed;
Which drew me hither by their pow'rful streams.
Ama. to S. Cath.] Go expiate thy guilt in holy dreams [*Ex.* Dam.
But thou, sweet Saint, henceforth disturb'd no more
With dreams not thine, thy thoughts to Heav'n restore.
The Angel ascends, and the Scene shuts.

Nig. Some holy Being does invade this place,
And from their duty does my Spirits chase.

I dare

I dare no longer near it make abode:
No Charms prevail againſt the Chriſtian's God. [*Exit.*

Placid. How doubtfully theſe Spectres Fate foretell!
In double ſenſe, and twi-light truth they dwell:
Like fawning Courtiers, for ſucceſs they wait,
And then come ſmiling and declare for Fate.

Enter Maximin *and* Porphyrius, *attended by* Valerius *and Guards.*

But ſee, the Tyrant and my Rival come:
I, like the Fiends, will flatter in his Doom:
None but a Fool diſtaſtful truth, will tell,
So it be new, and pleaſe, 'tis full as well.

Placid. *whiſpers with the Emperour, who ſeems pleas'd.*

Max. You charm me with your News, which I'll reward:
By hopes we are for coming joys prepar'd:
Poſſeſs her Love, or from that Love be free———
Heav'n ſpeaks me fair: if ſhe as kind can prove,
I ſhall poſſeſs, but never quit my Love.
Go, tell me when ſhe wakes—— [*Exit* Placidius.

Porphyrius *ſeems to beg ſomething of him.*

———*Porphyrius*, no;
She has refus'd, and I will keep my Vow.

Por. For your own ſake, your cruel Vow defer;
The time's unſafe, your Enemies are near.
And to diſpleaſe your men when they ſhould fight———

Max. My looks alone my Enemies will fright;
And o'r my men I'll ſet my careful Spies,
To watch Rebellion in their very Eyes.
No more, I cannot bear the leaſt reply.

Por. Yet, Tyrant, thou ſhalt periſh e're ſhe dye. [*Aſide.*

Enter Valeria.

Valeria here! how Fortune treats me ſtill
With various harms, magnificently ill!

Max. Valeria, I was ſending to your Tent, [*To* Valeria.
But my Commands your preſence does prevent.
This is the hour wherein the Prieſt ſhall join
Your holy Loves, and make *Porphyrius* mine.

Val. aſide.] Now hold, my heart, and *Venus* I implore,
Be Judge if ſhe he loves deſerves him more.

Por. aſide.] Paſt hope! and all in vain I would preſerve
My Life, not for my ſelf, but her I ſerve.

Val. I come, Great Sir, your Juſtice to demand. [*To the Emp.*

Max. You cannot doubt it from a Father's hand.

Por. Sir, I confeſs before her Suit be known;
And, by my ſelf condemn'd, my crime I owne.
I have refus'd———

Val. ———Peace, Peace, while I confeſs
I have refus'd thee for unworthineſs.

Por. I am amaz'd

Max. ——— What Riddles do you uſe?
Dare either of you my Commands refuſe?

Val. Yes, I dare owne howe'er 'twas wiſely done
T'adopt ſo mean a perſon for your Son:
So low you ſhould not for your Daughter chuſe:
And therefore, Sir, this Marriage I refuſe.

Max. You lik'd the Choice when firſt I thought it fit.

Val. I had not then enough conſider'd it.

Max. And you have now conſider'd it too much:
Secrets of Empire are not ſafe to touch.

Por. Let not your mighty anger riſe too high;
'Tis not *Valeria* merits it, but I.
My own unworthineſs ſo well I knew,
That from her Love I conſciouſly withdrew.

Val. Thus rather than endure the little ſhame
To be refus'd, you blaſt a Virgin's name.
You to refuſe, and I to be deny'd!
Learn more diſcretion, or be taught leſs pride.

Por. O Heav'n, in what a Lab'rinth am I led!
I could get out, but ſhe detains the Thred!
Now I muſt wander on till I can ſee,
Whether her pity or revenge it be! [*Aſide.*

Max. With what Child's anger do you think you play?
I'll puniſh both, if either diſobey.

Val. Since all the fault was mine, I am content
Porphyrius ſhould not ſhare the puniſhment.

Por. Blind that I was till now, that could not ſee,
'Twas all th' effects of generoſity.
She loves me, ev'n to ſuffer for my ſake;
And on her ſelf would my refuſal take. [*Aſide.*

Max. Children to ſerve their Parents int'reſt live. *To* Val.
Take heed what Doom againſt your ſelf you give.

Por. Since ſhe muſt ſuffer, if I do not ſpeak,
'Tis time the Laws of Decency to break.
She told me, Sir, that ſhe your Choice approv'd,
And (though I bluſh to owne it) ſaid ſhe lov'd,
Lov'd me deſertleſs, who, with ſhame, confeſt
Another Flame had ſeiz'd upon my Breſt.

Which

Which when, too late, the generous Princeſs knew,
And fear'd your Juſtice would my Crime purſue,
Upon her ſelf ſhe makes the Tempeſts fall,
And my refuſal her contempt would call.
Val. He raves, Sir, and to cover my diſdain,
Unhandſomly would his denial feign.
And all means failing him, at laſt would try
T'uſurp the credit of a ſcorn, and dye.
But——let him live——his puniſhment ſhall be
The grief his pride will bring for loſing me.
Max. You both obnoxious to my Juſtice are;
And, Daughter, you have not deſerv'd my care.
'Tis my Command you ſtrictly guarded be,
Till your fantaſtick Quarrel you agree.
Por. Sir——
Max. I'll not hear you ſpeak, her crime is plain,
She ownes her pride which you perhaps may feign.
She ſhall be Priſoner till ſhe bend her mind
To that which is for both of you deſign'd.
Val. You'll find it hard my free-born Will to bound.
Max. I'll find that pow'r o'r Wills which Heav'n ne'r found.
Free Will's a Cheat in any one but me;
In all but Kings 'tis willing Slavery.
An unſeen Fate which forces the deſire,
The Will of Puppets danc'd upon a Wire.
A Monarch is
The Spirit of the World in every mind;
He may match Wolves to Lambs, and make it kind.
Mine is the buſineſs of your little Fates:
And though you war, like petty wrangling States,
You're in my hand; when I bid you ceaſe,
You ſhall be cruſh'd together into peace.
Val. Aſide. Thus by the World my courage will be priz'd;
Seeming to ſcorn, who am, alas, deſpis'd:
Dying for Love's, fulfilling Honour's Laws;
A ſecret Martyr while I owne no Cauſe. [*Exit* Valeria.
Max. Porphyrius, ſtay; there's ſomething I would hear:
You ſaid you lov'd, and you muſt tell me where.
Por. All Heav'n is to my ſole deſtruction bent. [*Aſide.*
Max. You would, it ſeems, have leiſure to invent.
Por. Her name in pity, Sir, I muſt forbear,
Leſt my offences you revenge on her.
Max. My promiſe for her Life I do engage.
Por. Will that, Sir, be remembred in your rage?

Max. Speak, or your silence more my rage will move;
'Twill argue, that you rival me in Love.
Por. Can you believe that my ambitious Flame
Should mount so high as *Berenice*'s name?
Max. Your guilt dares not approach what it would hide;
But draws me off, and (Lapwing-like) flies wide.
'Tis not my Wife, but Mistress you adore:
Though that affronts, yet this offends me more.
Who courts my Wife——
Does to my Honour more injurious prove;
But he who courts my Mistris, wrongs my Love.
Por. Th' Ægyptian Princess ne'r could move my heart.
Max. You could not perish by a nobler Dart.
Por. Sir, I presume not Beauties to compare:
But in my eye my Princess is as fair.
Max. Your Princess! then it seems, though you deny
Her Name you love, you owne her Quality.
Por. Though not by Birth or Title so; yet she
Who rules my heart, a Princess is to me.
Max. No, No——
'Tis plain that word you unawares did use,
And told a truth which now you would excuse.
Besides my Wife and Mistris, here are none
Who can the Title of a Princess owne.
Por. There is one more——
Your Daughter, Sir: let that your doubt remove.
Max. But she is not that Princess whom you love.
Por. I nam'd not love, though it might doubtful seem;
She's fair; and is that Princess I esteem.
Max. Go, and to passion your esteem improve,
While I command her to receive your Love. [*Exit* Por.

Enter S. Catharine.

S. Cath. I come not now as Captive to your pow'r,
To beg; but as high Heaven's Ambassadour,
The Laws of my Religion to fulfill:
Heav'n sends me to return you Good for ill.
Your Empress ro your Love I would restore;
And to your Mind the Peace it had before.
Max. While in anothers Name you Peace declare,
Princess, you in your own proclaim a War.
Your too great pow'r does your design oppose;
You make those Breaches which you strive to close.

S. Cath.

S. Cath. That little Beauty which too much you prize,
Seeks not to move your Heart, or draw your Eyes:
Your love to *Berenice* is due alone:
Love, like that pow'r which I adore, is one.
When fixt to one, it safe at Anchor rides,
And dares the fury of the Winds and Tides:
But losing once that hold, to the wide Ocean born,
It drives away at will, to every Wave a scorn.
Max. If to new persons I my Love apply,
The Stars and Nature are in fault, not I:
My Loves are like my old Prætorian Bands,
Whose Arbitrary Pow'r their Prince Commands;
I can no more make Passion come or go,
Than you can bid your *Nilus* ebb or flow.
'Tis lawless, and will love, and where it list:
And that's no sin which no Man can resist:
Those who impute it to me as a Crime,
Would make a God of me before my time.
S. Cath. A God, indeed, after the *Roman* Style,
An Eagle mounting from a kindled Pile:
But you may make your self a God below:
For Kings who rule their own desires are so.
You roam about, and never are at rest;
By new desires, that is, new Torments, still possest.
Qualmish and loathing all you had before:
Yet with a sickly appetite to more.
As in a Fev'rish Dream you still drink on;
And wonder why your thirst is never gone.
Love, like a Ghostly Vision, haunts your mind;
'Tis still before you what you left behind.
Max. How can I help those faults which Nature made?
My Appetite is sickly and decay'd,
And you forbid me change (the sick Mans ease)
Who cannot Cure, must humour his Disease.
S. Cath. Your Mind should first the Remedy begin;
You seek without, the Cure that is within.
The vain Experiments you make each day,
To find content, still finding it decay,
Without attempting more, should let you see
That you have sought it where it ne're could be.
But when you place your Joyes on things above,
You fix the wand'ring Planet of your Love:
Thence you may see

Poor

Poor humane kind all daz'd in open day,
Err after Bliſs, and blindly miſs their way:
The greateſt happineſs a Prince can know,
Is to love Heav'n above, do good below.

To them Berenice, *and Attendants.*

Ber. That happineſs may *Berenice* find,
Leaving theſe empty Joyes of Earth behind:
And this frail Being, where ſo ſhort a while
Th' unfortunate lament, and proſp'rous ſmile.
Yet a few dayes, and thoſe which now appear
In Youth and Beauty, like the blooming Year,
In life's ſweet Scene ſhall change; and cares ſhall come,
And heavy Age, and Death's relentleſs doom.

S. Cath. Yet Man, by pleaſures ſeeks that Fate which he would ſhun;
And, ſuck'd in by the ſtream, does to the Whirl-Pool run.

Max. How, Madam, are you to new ways inclin'd? [*To* Ber.
I fear the Chriſtian Sect perverts your mind.

Ber. Yes, Tyrant, know that I their Faith embrace,
And own it in the midſt of my diſgrace.
That Faith, which abject as it ſeems to thee,
Is Nobler than thy Purple Pageantry;
A Faith, which ſtill with Nature is at ſtrife;
And looks beyond it to a future life.
A Faith, which vicious Souls abhor and fear,
Becauſe it ſhews Eternity too near.
And therefore every one ——
With ſeeming ſcorn of it the reſt deceives:
All joining not to own what each believes.

S. Cath. O happy Queen! whom Pow'r leads not aſtray,
Nor Youth's more powerful blandiſhments betray.

Ber. Your Arguments my reaſon firſt inclin'd,
And then your bright Example fix'd my mind.

Max. With what a holy Empreſs am I bleſt,
What ſcorn of Earth dwells in her Heav'nly breſt!
My Crown's too mean; but he whom you adore,
Has one more bright, of Martyrdom in ſtore.
She dies, and I am from the Envy freed: [*Aſide.*
She has, I thank her, her own Death decreed.
No Souldier, now, will in her reſcue ſtir;
Her Death is but in complaiſance to her.
I'll haſte to gratify her holy Will;
Heav'n grant her Zeal may but continue ſtill.

To

To Val. Tribune, a Guard to ſeize the Empreſs ſtrait,
Secure her perſon Pris'ner to the State. [*Ex.* Maxim.
Val going to her. Madam, believe 'tis with regret I come
To execute my angry Prince's doom.

Enter Porphyrius.

Por. What is it I behold! Tribune, from whence
Proceeds this more than barbarous inſolence?
Val. Sir, I perform the Emperour's Commands.
Por. Villain, hold off thy ſacrilegious hands,
Or by the Gods ——— retire without reply:
And, if he asks who bid thee, ſay 'twas I.
[Valerius *retires to a diſtance.*
Ber. Too generouſly your ſafety you expoſe
To ſave one moment her whom you muſt loſe.
Por. 'Twixt you and death ten thouſand lives there ſtand;
Have Courage, Madam, the *Prætorian* Band
Will all oppoſe your Tyrants Cruelty.
S. Cath. And I have Heav'n implor'd ſhe may not die.
As ſome to witneſs Truth, Heav'ns call obey;
So ſome on Earth muſt, to confirm it, ſtay.
Por. What Faith, what Witneſs is it that you name?
Ber. Knowing what ſhe believes, my Faiths the ſame.
Por. How am I croſs'd what way ſoe're I go!
To the unlucky every thing is ſo.
Now, Fortune, thou haſt ſhewn thy utmoſt ſpight:
The Souldiers will not for a Chriſtian fight.
And, Madam, all that I can promiſe now,
Is but to die before Death reaches you.
Ber. Now Death draws near, a ſtrange perplexity
Creeps coldly on me, like a fear to die:
Courage, uncertain Dangers may abate;
But who can bear th' approach of certain Fate?
S. Cath. The wiſeſt and the beſt ſome fear may ſhew;
And wiſh to ſtay, though they reſolve to go.
Ber. As ſome faint Pilgrim ſtanding on the ſhore,
Firſt views the Torrent he would venture o're;
And then his Inn upon the farther ground,
Loth to wade through, and lother to go round:
Then dipping in his Staff do's trial make,
How deep it is; and, ſighing, pulls it back,
Sometimes reſolv'd to fetch his leap; and then
Runs to the Bank, but there ſtops ſhort agen;

So

So I at once ——
Both Heav'nly Faith, and humane Fear obey;
And feel before me in an unknown way.
For this bleſt Voyage I with Joy prepare;
Yet am aſham'd to be a ſtranger there.
S. Cath. You are not yet enough prepar'd to die:
Earth hangs too heavy for your Soul to flie.
Por. One way (and Heav'n, I hope, inſpires my mind)
I for your ſafety in this ſtraight can find:
But this fair Queen muſt farther my intent.
S. Cath. Name any way your Reaſon can invent.
Por. to Ber. Though your Religion (which I cannot blame,
Becauſe my ſecret Soul avows the ſame)
Has made your Life a forfeit to the Laws,
The Tyrant new-born Paſſion is the cauſe.
Were this bright Princeſs once remov'd away,
Wanting the food, the flame would ſoon decay.
And I'll prepare a faithful Guard this night
T' attend her perſon, and ſecure her flight.
Ber. to S. Cath. By this way I ſhall both from Death be freed,
And you unforc'd to any wicked Deed.
S. Cath. Madam, my thoughts are with themſelves at ſtrife;
And Heav'n can witneſs how I prize your Life:
But 'tis a doubtful Conflict I muſt try
Betwixt my Pity and my Piety.
Staying, your precious Life I muſt expoſe:
Going, my Crown of Martyrdom I loſe.
Por. Your equal choice when Heav'n does thus divide,
You ſhould, like Heav'n, ſtill lean on Mercy's ſide.
S. Cath. The Will of Heav'n, judg'd by a private Breſt,
Is often what's our private intereſt.
And therefore thoſe, who would that Will obey,
Without their int'reſt muſt their Duty weigh.
As for my ſelf, I do not Life deſpiſe;
But as the greateſt gift of Nature prize.
My Sex is weak, my fears of Death are ſtrong;
And whate're is, its Being would prolong.
Were there no ſting in Death, for me to die,
Would not be Conqueſt, but ſtupidity.
But if vain Honour can confirm the Soul,
And ſenſe of ſhame the fear of Death controul,
How much more then ſhould Faith uphold the Mind,
Which, ſhewing Death, ſhews future Life behind?

Ber. Of Death's contempt Heroick Proofs you give:
But, Madam, let my weaker Vertue live.
Your Faith may bid you your own life resign;
But not when yours must be involv'd with mine.
Since, then, you do not think me fit to dye,
Ah, how can you that Life I beg, deny!

S. Cath. Heav'n does in this my greatest trial make,
When I for it, the care of you forsake.
But I am plac'd as on a Theatre,
Where all my Acts to all Mankind appear,
To imitate my constancy or fear.
Then, Madam, judge what course I should pursue,
When I must either Heav'n forsake, or you.

Por. Were saving *Berenice*'s Life a sin,
Heav'n had shut up your Flight from *Maximin.*

S. Cath. Thus with short Plummets Heav'ns deep Will we sound,
That vast Abyss where humane Wit is drown'd!
In our small Skiff we must not launch too far;
We here but Coasters, not Discov'rers are.
Faith's necessary Rules are plain and few;
We many, and those needless Rules pursue:
Faith from our hearts into our heads we drive;
And make Religion all Contemplative.
You, on Heav'ns Will may witty Glosses feign;
But that which I must practise here, is plain:
If the All-great Decree her Life to spare,
He will, the means, without my Crime prepare. [*Exit S.* Cath.

Por. Yet there is one way left! it is decreed
To save your Life, that *Maximin* shall bleed.
'Midst all his Guards I will his Death pursue,
Or fall a Sacrifice to Love and you.

Ber. So great a fear of Death I have not shown,
That I would shed his Blood to save my own.
My fear is but from humane frailty brought,
And never mingled with a wicked thought.

Por. 'Tis not a Crime, since one of you must dye;
Or is excus'd by the necessity.

Ber. I cannot to a Husband's Death consent;
But, by revealing, will your Crime prevent:
The horrour of this Deed——
Against the fear of Death has arm'd my mind;
And now less guilt in him than you I find:
If I a Tyrant did detest before,
I hate a Rebel and a Traytor more:

Ungrateful man———
Remember whose Succeſſor thou art made,
And then thy Benefactors Life invade.
Guards to your Charge, I give your Priſ'ner back:
And will from none but Heaven my ſafety take.
Exit with Valerius *and Guards.*

Por. ſolus.] 'Tis true, what ſhe has often urg'd before;
He's both my Father and my Emperour!
O Honour, how can'ſt thou invent a way
To ſave my Queen, and not my Truſt betray!
Unhappy I, that e're he truſted me!
As well his Guardian-Angel may his Murd'rer be.
And yet—— let Honour, Faith, and Vertue flie,
But let not Love in *Berenice* die.
She lives!———
That's put beyond Diſpute, as firm as Fate:
Honour and Faith let Argument debate.

Enter Maximin *and* Valerius *talking, and Guards.*

Max. 'Tis ſaid; but I am loth to think it true, [*To* Porph.
That my late Orders were contemn'd by you:
That *Berenice* from her Guards you freed.
Por. I did it, and I glory in the Deed.
Max. How, glory my Commands to diſobey!
Por. When thoſe Commands would your Renown betray.
Max. Who ſhould be Judge of that Renown you name
But I?
Por. ———Yes I, and all who love your Fame,
Max. Porphyrius, your Replies are inſolent.
Por. Sir, they are juſt, and for your ſervice meant.
If, for Religion, you our Lives will take;
You do not the Offenders find, but make.
All Faiths are to their own Believers juſt;
For none believe, becauſe they will, but muſt.
Faith is a force from which there's no defence;
Becauſe the Reaſon it does firſt convince,
And Reaſon Conſcience into Fetters brings;
And Conſcience is without the pow'r of Kings.
Max. Then Conſcience is a greater Prince than I:
At whoſe each erring Call, a King may dye.
Who Conſcience leaves to its own free Command,
Puts the worſt Weapon in a Rebel's hand.

Por.

Por. Its Empire, therefore, Sir, ſhould bounded be;
And but in Acts of its Religion free:
Thoſe who ask Civil Pow'r and Conſcience too,
Their Monarch to his own Deſtruction woo.
With needful Arms let him ſecure his Peace;
Then, that wild Beaſt he ſafely may releaſe.

Max. I can forgive theſe Liberties you take,
While but my Counſellour your ſelf you make:
But you firſt act your ſence, and then adviſe:
That is, at my expence you will be wiſe.
My Wife, I for Religion do not kill;
But ſhe ſhall dye——becauſe it is my Will.

Por. Sir, I acknowledge I too much have done;
And therefore merit not to be your Son:
I render back the Honours which you gave;
My Liberty's the only Gift I crave.

Max. You take too much: ——but e're you lay it down.
Conſider what you part with in a Crown:
Monarchs of Cares in Policy complain,
Becauſe they would be pity'd while they reign;
For ſtill the greater troubles they confeſs,
They know their Pleaſures will be envy'd leſs.

Por. Thoſe Joys I neither envy nor admire;
But beg I from the Troubles may retire.

Max. What Soul is this which Empire cannot ſtir!
Supine and tame as a Philoſopher!
Know then, thou wert adopted to a Throne,
Not for thy ſake ſo much as for my own.
My thoughts were once about thy Death at ſtrife;
And thy Succeſſion's thy Reprieve for Life.

Por. My Life and Death are ſtill within your pow'r:
But your Succeſſion I renounce this hour.
Upon a Bloody Throne I will not ſit;
Nor ſhare the guilt of Crimes which you commit.

Max. If you are not my *Cæſar*, you muſt dye.

Por. I take it as the nobler Deſtiny.

Max. I pity thee, and would thy faults forgive:
But thus preſuming on, thou canſt not live.

Por. Sir, with your Throne your pity I reſtore;
I am your Foe; nor will I uſe it more.
Now all my Debts of Gratitude are paid,
I cannot truſted be, nor you betray'd [*Is going.*

Max. Stay, ſtay! in threat'ning me to be my Foe,
You give me warning to conclude you ſo.

Thou to succeed a Monarch in his Seat!

Enter Placidius.

No, Fool, thou art too honest to be Great!
Placidius, on your life this Pris'ner keep:
Our enmity shall end before I sleep.
Placid. I still am ready, Sir, whene'r you please. [*To* Porph.
To do you such small Services as these.
Max. The sight with which my eyes shall first be fed,
Must be my Empress, and this Traytor's Head.
Por. Where e'r thou stand'st, I'll level at that place
My gushing Bloud, and spout it at thy face.
Thus, not by Marriage, we our Blood will join:
Nay more, my Arms shall throw my Head at thine. [*Exit guarded.*
Max. There: go Adoption:——I have now decreed,
That *Maximin* shall *Maximin* succeed:
Old as I am, in pleasures I will try
To waste an Empire yet before I dye:
Since Life is fugitive, and will not stay,
I'll make it flie more pleasantly away. [*Exit.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

Valeria, Placidius.

Val. IF, as you say, you silently have been
So long my Lover, let my pow'r be seen:
One hours discourse before *Porphyrius* dye,
Is all I ask, and you too may be by.
Placid. I must not break
The Order, which the Emperour did sign.
Val. Has then his hand more pow'r with you than mine?
Placid. This hand if given, would far more pow'rful be,
Than all the Monarchs of the World to me:
But 'tis a Bait which would my heart betray;
And, when I'm fast, will soon be snatch'd away.
Val. O say not so, for I shall ever be
Oblig'd to him who once obliges me.
Placid. Madam, I'll wink, and favour your deceit:
But know, fair Coz'ner, that I know the Cheat:
Though to these Eyes I nothing can refuse,
I'll not the merit of my ruine lose:

It is enough I see the hook, and bite:
But first I'll pay my death with my delight. [*Kisses her hand, and Exit.*
Val. What can I hope from this sad interview!
And yet my brave design I will pursue.
By many signs I have my Rival found:
But fortune him, as deep as me, does wound.
For, if he loves the Empress, his sad Fate
More moves my pity, than his scorn my hate.
To her Placidius *with* Porphyrius.
Placid. I am, perhaps, the first
Who forc'd by Fate, and in his own despite,
Brought a lov'd Rival to his Mistris sight.
Val. But, in revenge, let this your comfort be,
That you have brought a man who loves not me.
However, lay your causeless envy by;
He is a Rival who must quickly die.
Por. And yet I could with less concernment bear
That death of which you speak, than see you here.
So much of guilt in my refusal lies,
That, Debtor-like, I dare not meet your eyes.
Val. I do not blame you if you love else-where:
And, would to Heav'n, I could your suff'rings bear;
Or once again could some new way invent
To take upon my self your punishment:
I sent for you, to let you know that still
(Though now I want the pow'r) I have the will.
Placid. Can all this Ocean of your kindness be
pour'd upon him, and not one drop on me?
Val. 'Tis pour'd; but falls from this ungrateful man,
Like drops of water from a rising Swan.
Upon his breast no sign of wet remains;
He bears his Love more proudly than his Chains.
Por. This thankless man his death will soon remove,
And quickly end so undeserv'd a Love.
Val. Unthankful as you are, I know not why,
But still I love too well to see you die.
Placidius, can you love, and see my grief,
And for my sake not offer some relief?
Placid. Not all the Gods his ruine shall prevent;
Your kindness does but urge his punishment.
Besides, what can I for his safety do?
He has declar'd himself your Father's Foe.
Val. Give out he is escap'd, and set him free:
And, if you please, lay all the fault on me.

Por. O do not on those terms my freedom name:
Freed by your danger I should die with shame.
Placid. I must not farther by your Prayers be won: [*To her.*
All I could do I have already done.
Val. To bring *Porphyrius* only to my sight,
Was not to show your pity, but your spight:
Would you but half oblige her you adore?
You should not have done this, or should do more.
Placid. Alas, what hope can there be left for me,
When I must sink into the Mine I see?
My Heart will fall before you, if I stay;
Each word you speak saps part of it away——
—— Yet all my Fortune on his Death is set:
And he may love her, though he loves not yet.
He must —— and yet she sayes he must not die:
O, if I could but wink, I could deny.
To them Albinus.
Alb. The Emperour expects your Pris'ner strait:
And, with impatience, for his death does wait.
Placid. Nay, then it is too late my Love to weigh. [*Exit* Alb.
Your Pardon, Madam, if I must obey.
Por. I am prepar'd, he shall not long attend.
Val. Then here my Pray'rs, and my submissions end.
Placidius know, that hour in which he dies,
My Death (so well I love) shall wait on his.
Placid. O, Madam, do not fright me with your Death!
Val. My Life depends alone upon his Breath.
But, if I live in him, you do not know
How far my gratitude to you may go.
I do not promise —— but it so may prove,
That Gratitude, in time, may turn to Love.
Try me ——
Placid. —— Now I consider it, I will: [*Musing a little.*
'Tis in your pow'r to save him or to kill.
I'll run the hazard to preserve his Life,
If, after that, you vow to be my Wife.
Val. Nay, good *Placidius*, now you are too hard:
Would you do nothing but for meer reward?
Like Usurers to men in want you prove,
When you would take Extortion for my Love.
Placid. You have concluded then that he must die. [*Going with* Porph.
Val. O stay, if no price else his Life can buy,
My Love a ransome for his Life I give: [*Holding her Handkerchief*
Let my *Porphyrius* for another live. *before her Face.*

Por.

Por. You too much value the ſmall Merchandiſe:
My Life's o'r-rated, when your Love's the price.

Enter Albinus.

Alb. I long have liſt'ned to your generous ſtrife,
As much concern'd for brave *Porphyrius* Life.
For mine I to his favour ow'd this day;
Which with my future Service I will pay.
Placid. Leſt any your intended flight prevent,
I'll lead you firſt the back way to my Tent:
Thence, in diſguiſe, you may the City gain,
While ſome excuſe for your eſcape I feign.
Val. Farewel, I muſt not ſee you when you part: [*Turning her Face away.*
For that laſt look would break my tender heart.
Yet —— let it break —— I muſt have one look more: [*Looking on him.*
Nay, now I'm leſs contented than before.
For that laſt look draws on another too;
Which ſure I need not to remember you.
For ever — yet I muſt one glance repeat;
But quick and ſhort as ſtarving people eat.
So much humanity dwells in your Breſt,
Sometimes to think on her who loves you beſt.
[*Going, he takes her hand and kiſſes it.*
Por. My wandring ſteps where ever Fortune bear,
Your memory I in my Breaſt will wear.
Which, as a precious Amulet I ſtill
Will carry, my defence and guard from ill.
Though to my former Vows I muſt be true,
I'll ever keep one Love entire for you.
That Love which Brothers with chaſte Siſters make:
And by this Holy Kiſs, which now I take
From your fair hand ——
This common Sun, which abſent both ſhall ſee,
Shall ne'r behold a breach of Faith in me.
Val. Go, go, my Death will your ſhort Vows reſtore:
You've ſaid enough, and I can hear no more.
[*Exit* Valeria *one way, and* Porph. *and* Alb. *another.*
Placid. Love and good Nature, how do you betray!
Miſleading thoſe who ſee and know their way!
I, whom deep Arts of State could ne'r beguile,
Have ſold my ſelf to ruine for a ſmile.
Nay, I am driven ſo low, that I muſt take
That ſmile, as Alms, giv'n for my Rival's ſake.

Enter

Enter Maximin *talking with* Valerius.

Max. And why was I not told of this before?
Val. Sir, she this Evening landed on the shore.
For with her Daughter being Pris'ner made,
She in another Vessel was convey'd.
Max. Bring hither the Ægyptian Princess strait. [*To* Placid.
And you, *Valerius* on her Mother wait. [*Exit* Valerius.
Placid. The Mother of th' Ægyptian Princess here!
Max. *Porphyrius*'s Death I will a while defer;
And this new opportunity improve
To make my last effort upon her Love —— [*Exit* Placid.
Those who have youth may long endure to court;
But he must quickly catch whose Race is short.
I in my Autumn do my Siege begin;
And must make haste ere Winter comes, to win.
This hour —— no longer shall my pains endure:
Her Love shall ease me, or her Death shall cure.

Enter at one Door Felicia *and* Valerius, *at the other* S. Catharine *and* Placidius.

S. Cath. O, my dear Mother!
Fel. —— With what joy I see
My dearest Daughter from the Tempest free.
S. Cath. Dearer than all the joys vain Empire yields,
Or than to youthful Monarchs conquer'd Fields.
Before you came —— my Soul
All fill'd with Heav'n did Earthly Joys disdain,
But you pull back some part of me again.
Placid. You see, Sir, she can own a joy below.
Max. It much imports me that this truth I know.
Fel. How dreadful Death does on the Waves appear!
Where Seas we only see, and Tempests shear.
Such frightful Images did then pursue
My trembling Soul, that scarce I thought of you.
Placid. All Circumstances to your wish combine:
Her fear of Death advances your design.
Fel But to that only pow'r we serve I pray'd,
Till he, who bid it rise, the Tempest laid.
Max. You are a Christian then! [*To* Felicia.
For Death this very hour you must prepare:
I have decreed no Christian's Life to spare.

Fel.

Fel. For Death! I hope you but my Courage try:
What ever I believe, I dare not die.
Heav'n does not, ſure, that Seal of Faith require;
Or, if it did, would firmer thoughts inſpire.
A Womans Witneſs can no credit give
To Truths Divine, and therefore I would live.
Max. I cannot give the life which you demand:
But that and mine are in your Daughter's hand:
Ask her, if ſhe will yet her Love deny;
And bid a Monarch and her Mother die.
Fel. Now, mighty Prince, you cancel all my fear:
My Life is ſafe when it depends on her.
How can you let me languiſh thus in pain! [*To S.* Cath.
Make haſte to cure thoſe doubts which yet remain.
Speak quickly, ſpeak, and eaſe me of my fear.
S. Cath. Alas, I doubt it is not you I hear.
Some wicked Fiend aſſumes your Voice and Face,
To make frail Nature triumph over Grace.
It cannot be ——
That ſhe who taught my Childhood Piety,
Should bid my riper Age my Faith deny:
That ſhe who bid my hopes this Crown purſue,
Should ſnatch it from me when 'tis juſt in view.
Fel. Peace, Peace, too much my Age's ſhame you ſhow:
How eaſie 'tis to teach! how hard to do!
My lab'ring thoughts are with themſelves at ſtrife:
I dare not die, nor bid you ſave my life.
Max. You muſt do one, and that without delay;
Too long already for your Death I ſtay:
I cannot with your ſmall concerns diſpence;
For Deaths of more importance call me hence.
Prepare to execute your office ſtrait. [*To his Guards.*
Fel. O ſtay, and let 'em but one minute wait.
Such quick Commands for Death you would not give,
If you but knew how ſweet it were to live.
Max. Then bid her love.
Fel. —— Is duty grown ſo weak, [*To S.* Cath.
That Love's a harder word than Death to ſpeak?
S. Cath. Oh!
Fel. Miſtake me not, I never can approve [*Privately to S.* Cath.
A thing ſo wicked as the Tyrants Love.
I ask you would but ſome falſe promiſe give,
Only to gain me ſo much time to live.

S. Cath. That promiſe is a ſtep to greater ſin:
The hold once loſt, we ſeldom take agen.
Each bound to Heav'n we fainter Eſſays make;
Still loſing ſomewhat till we quite go back.
Max. Away, I grant no longer a Reprieve.
Fel. O do but beg my Life, and I may live. [*To S.* Cath.
Have you not ſo much pity in your Breſt?
He ſtays to have you make it your requeſt.
S. Cath. To beg your Life ——
Is not to ask a grace of *Maximin*:
It is a ſilent bargain for a Sin.
Could we live always, Life were worth our coſt;
But now we keep with care what muſt be loſt.
Here we ſtand ſhiv'ring on the Bank, and cry,
When we ſhould plunge into Eternity.
One moment ends our pain;
And yet the ſhock of Death we dare not ſtand,
By thought ſcarce meaſur'd, and too ſwift for ſand:
'Tis but becauſe the living death ne'r knew,
They fear to prove it as a thing that's new.
Let me th' Experiment before you try,
I'll ſhow you firſt how eaſie 'tis to die.
Max. Draw then that Curtain, and let Death appear,
And let both ſee how eaſie 'twill be there.
The Scene opens, and ſhews the Wheel.
Fel. Alas, what torments I already feel!
Max. Go, bind her Hand and Foot beneath that Wheel:
Four of you turn the dreadful Engine round;
Four others hold her faſt'ned to the ground:
That by degrees her tender Breaſts may feel,
Firſt the rough razings of the pointed ſteel:
Her Paps then let the bearded Tenters ſtake,
And on each Hook a gory Gobbet take.
Till th' upper fleſh by piece-meal torn away,
Her beating Heart ſhall to the Sun diſplay.
Fel. My deareſt Daughter at your Feet I fall; [*Kneeling.*
Hear, O yet hear your wretched Mothers call.
Think, at your Birth, Ah think what pains I bore,
And can your Eyes behold me ſuffer more?
You were the Child which from your Infancy
I ſtill lov'd beſt, and then you beſt lov'd me.
About my Neck your little Arms you ſpred,
Nor could you ſleep without me in the Bed;

But ſought my boſom when you went to reſt,
And all night long would lie acroſs my breſt.
Nor without cauſe did you that fondneſs ſhow:
You may remember when our *Nile* did flow;
While on the Bank you innocently ſtood,
And with a Wand made Circles in the Floud,
That roſe, and juſt was hurrying you to Death,
When I, from far, all pale, and out of breath,
Ran and ruſh'd in ———.
And from the Waves my floating pledge did bear;
So much my Love was ſtronger than my Fear.
But you ———

Max. Woman, for theſe long tales your Life's too ſhort;
Go, bind her quickly, and begin the ſport.

Fel. No, in her Arms my Sanctuary's plac'd: [*Running to her Daughter.*
Thus I will cling for ever to her waſte.

Max. What, muſt my will by Women be controll'd?
Haſte, draw your Weapons, and cut off her hold.

S. Cath. Thus my laſt duty to you let me pay: [*Kiſſing her Mother.*
Yet, Tyrant, I to thee will never pray.
Though hers to ſave I my own Life would give,
Yet by my ſin, my Mother ſhall not live.
To thy foul luſt I never can conſent;
Why doſt thou then defer my puniſhment?
I ſcorn thoſe Gods thou vainly doſt adore:
Contemn thy Empire, but thy Bed abhor.
If thou wouldſt yet a bloodier Tyrant be,
I will inſtruct thy rage, begin with me.

Max. I thank thee that thou doſt my anger move:
It is a Tempeſt that will wreck my Love.
I'll pull thee hence, cloſe hidden as thou art,
[*Claps his hand to his Breaſt.*
And ſtand with my drawn Sword before my Heart.
Yes, you ſhall be obey'd, though I am loth,
Go, and while I can bid you, bind 'em both.
Go, bind 'em ere my fit of Love return:
Fire ſhall quench Fire, and Anger Love ſhall burn.
Thus I prevent thoſe Follies I ſhould do;
And 'tis the nobler Fever of the two.

Fel. Torn piece by piece, alas, what horrid pains!

S. Cath. Heav'n is all Mercy, who that Death ordains.
And that which Heav'n thinks beſt is ſurely ſo:
But bare and naked, ſhame to undergo,
'Tis ſomewhat more than Death!

Expos'd to lawleſs Eyes I dare not be,
My modeſty is ſacred, Heav'n, to thee.
Let not my Body be the Tyrant's Spoil;
Nor hands, nor eyes thy purity defile.

Amariel *deſcends ſwiftly with a flaming Sword, and ſtrikes at the Wheel, which breaks in pieces; then he aſcends again.*

Max. Is this th' effect of all your boaſted skill?
Theſe brittle Toys to execute my Will;
A Puppet-ſhow of Death I only find,
Where I a ſtrong and ſinewy Pain deſign'd.
By what weak Infant was this Engine wrought?

Val. From *Bilbilis* the temper'd Steel was brought:
Metal more tough the Anvil ne'er did beat,
Nor from the Forge did hiſſing Waters heat.

Placid. I ſaw a Youth deſcend all Heav'nly fair,
Who in his hand a flaming Sword did bear,
And, Whirlwind-like, around him drove the Air.
At his rais'd Arm the rigid Iron ſhook;
And, bending backwards, fled before the ſtroke.

Max. What! Miracles, the tricks of Heav'n to me!
I'll try if ſhe be wholly Iron-free.
If not by Sword, then ſhe ſhall dye by Fire;
And, one by one, her Miracles I'll tire.
If proof againſt all kind of Deaths ſhe be,
My Love's immortal, and ſhe's fit for me.

S. Cath. No, Heav'n has ſhown its pow'r, and now thinks fit
Thee to thy former fury to remit.
Had Providence my longer life decreed,
Thou from thy paſſion hadſt not yet been freed.
But Heav'n, which ſuffer'd that, my Faith to prove,
Now to it ſelf does vindicate my Love.
A pow'r controlls thee which thou doſt not ſee;
And that's a Miracle it works in thee.

Max. The truth of this new Miracle we'll try;
To prove it, you muſt take the pains to dye.
Bring me their Heads———

Fel. That mercy, Tyrant, thou deny'ſt to me,
At thy laſt breath may Heav'n refuſe to thee.
My fears are going, and I Death can view:
I ſee, I ſee, him there thy ſteps purſue.
And with a lifted Arm, and ſilent Pace,
Stalk after thee, juſt aiming in his Chaſe.

S. Cath. No more, dear Mother; ill in Death it ſhows
Your Peace of Mind by rage to diſcompoſe:

No

No Streak of Blood (the Reliques of the Earth)
Shall ſtain my Soul in her Immortal Birth;
But ſhe ſhall mount all pure, a white, and Virgin mind;
And full of all that Peace which there ſhe goes to find.

Exeunt S. Catharine *and* Felicia, *with* Valerius *and Guards. The Scene ſhuts.*

Max. She's gone, and pull'd my heart ſtrings as ſhe went.
Were penitence no ſhame, I could repent.
Yet 'tis of bad Example ſhe ſhould live;
For I might get th' ill habit to forgive.
Thou ſoft Seducer of my heart, away———
Who lingring would about its Confines ſtay,
To watch when ſome Rebellion would begin;
And ready at each ſigh to enter in.
In vain; for thou
Doſt on the outſide of the Body play,
And, when drawn neareſt, ſhalt be whirl'd away.
What ails me, that I cannot loſe thy thought!
Command the Empreſs hither to be brought; [*To* Placidius.
I in her Death ſhall ſome diverſion find,
And rid my thoughts at once of Woman-kind.

Placid. *aſide.*] 'Tis well he thinks not of *Porphyrius* yet. [*Exit.*

Max. How hard it is this beauty to forget!
My ſtormy Rage has only ſhook my Will:
She crept down lower, but ſhe ſticks there ſtill.
Fool that I am to ſtruggle thus with Love!
Why ſhould I that which pleaſes me remove?
True, ſhe ſhould dye, were ſhe concern'd alone;
But I love, not for her ſake, but my own.
Our Gods are Gods 'cauſe they have pow'r and will;
Who can do all things, can do nothing ill.
Ill is Rebellion 'gainſt ſome higher pow'r:
The World may ſin, but not its Emperour.
My Empreſs then ſhall die, my Princeſs live;
If this be ſin, I do my ſelf forgive.

[*To him* Valerius.

Val. Your will's obey'd; for, mighty Emperour,
The Princeſs and her Mother are no more.

Max. She is not dead!

Val. ——— Great Sir, your will was ſo.

Max. That was my will of half an hour ago.
But now 'tis alter'd; I have chang'd her Fate,
She ſhall not die.

Val. ——— Your pity comes too late.

Betwixt

Betwixt her Guards she seem'd by Bride-men led,
Her cheeks with cheerful blushes were o'r-spread,
When, smiling, to the Ax she bow'd her head.
Just at the stroke———
Ætherial Musick did her death prepare;
Like joyful sounds of Spousals in the air.
A radiant light did her crown'd Temples gild,
And all the place with fragrant scents was fill'd.
The Balmy mist came thick'ning to the ground,
And Sacred silence cover'd all around,
But when (its work perform'd) the Cloud withdrew,
And day restor'd us to each others view,
I sought her head to bring it on my Spear;
In vain I sought it, for it was not there.
No part remain'd; but from afar our sight
Discover'd in the air long tracts of light
Of charming Notes we heard the last rebounds,
And Musick dying in remoter sounds.
Max. And dost thou think
This lame account fit for a Love-sick King?
Go — from the other world a better bring.
[*Kills him, then sets his foot on him, and speaks on.*
When in my breast two mighty passions strove,
Thou had'st err'd better in obeying Love.
'Tis true, that way thy death had follow'd too.
But I had then been less displeas'd than now.
Now I must live unquiet for thy sake;
And this poor recompence is all I take. [*Spurns the body.*

Here the Scene opens, and discovers Berenice *on a Scaffold, the Guards by her, and amongst them* Porphyrius *and* Albinus, *like Moors, as all the Guards are.* Placidius *enters, and whispers the Emperour whilst* Porphyrius *speaks.*

Por. From *Berenice* I cannot go away;
But, like a Ghost, must near my Treasure stay.
Alb. Night and this shape secure us from their eyes.
Por. Have courage then for our bold enterprise.
Duty and Faith no tie on me can have,
Since I renounc'd those Honours which he gave.
Max. The time is come we did so long attend, [*To* Ber.
Which must these discords of our Marriage end.
Yet, *Berenice*, remember you have been
An Empress, and the Wife of *Maximin.*
Ber. I well remember I have been your Wife;
And therefore, dying, beg from Heav'n your life:

Be

Be all the Discords of our Bed forgot,
Which, Vertue witness, I did never spot.
What errours I have made, though while I live
You cannot pardon, to the dead forgive.
Max. How much she is to piety inclin'd!
Behead her while she's in so good a mind.
Por. Srand firm, *Albinus*, now the time is come
To free the Empress.
Alb. ——————And deliver *Rome.*
Por. Within I feel my hot Blood swell my heart,
And generous tremblings in each outward part;
'Tis done—— Tyrant, this is thy latest hour.
Porphyrius *and* Albinus *draw, and are making at the Emperour.*
Ber. Look to your self, my Lord the Emperour:
Treason, help, help, my Lord!
Maximin *turns and defends himself, the Guards set on* Porphyrius *and* Albinus.
Max. Disarm 'em, but their Lives I charge you spare.
[*After they are disarm'd.*
Unmask 'em, and discover who they are.
Good Gods! is it *Porphyrius* whom I see?
Placid. I wonder how he gain'd his Liberty.
Max. Traytor!
Por. ——Know, Tyrant, I can hear that name
Rather than Son, and bear it with less shame.
Traytor's a Name, which, were my Arm yet free,
The Roman Senate would bestow on thee.
To Ber.] Ah, Madam, you have ruin'd my design,
And lost your Life; for I regard not mine.
Too ill a Mistris, and too good a Wife;
Ber. It was my Duty to preserve his life.
Max. Now I perceive [*To* Porphyrius.
In what close Walk your mind so long did move:
You scorn'd my Throne, aspiring to her Love.
Ber. In Death I'll owne a Love to him so pure,
As will the Test of Heav'n it self endure.
A Love so chaste, as Conscience could not chide;
But cherish it, and kept it by its side.
A Love which never knew a hot desire,
But flam'd as harmless as a lambent Fire.
A Love which pure from Soul to Soul might pass,
As Light transmitted through a Crystal Glass.

Which gave *Porphyrius* all without a sin;
Yet kept entire the Right of *Maximin*.
Max. The best return that I to both can make,
Shall be to suffer for each others sake.
Por. Barbarian, do not dare her bloud to shed,
Who from my vengeance sav'd thy cursed Head.
A flight no Honour ever reach'd before;
And which succeeding Ages will adore.
Ber. Porphyrius, I must die!
That common debt to Nature paid must be;
But I have left a Debt unpaid to thee.
To *Maximin* ——————
I have perform'd the duty of a Wife;
But, saving his, I cast away thy Life.
Ah, what ill Stars upon our Loves did shine,
That I am more thy Murd'rer than he mine.
Max. Make haste.
Por. So hasty none in Execution are,
But they allow the dying time for Pray'r.
Farewel, sweet Saint, my Prayer shall be to you:
My Love has been unhappy, but 'twas true.
Remember me! Alas, what have I sed?
You must die too!
But yet remember me when you are dead.
Ber. If I die first, I will ——
Stop short of Heav'n, and wait you in a Cloud;
For fear we lose each other in the crowd.
Por. Love is the only Coin in Heav'n will go.
Then take all with you, and leave none below.
Ber. 'Tis want of knowledge, not of Love, I fear,
Lest we mistake when Bodies are not there,
O as a mark that I could wear a Scroul,
With this Inscription, *Berenice*'s Soul.
Por. That needs not, sure, for none will be so bright,
So pure, or with so small allays of light.
Max. From my full Eyes fond Tears begin to start;
Dispatch, they practise Treason on my Heart.
Por. Adieu, this Farewel sigh, I as my last bequeath,
Catch it, 'tis Love expiring in a breath.
Ber. This sigh of mine shall meet it half the way,
As pledges given that each for other stay.

Enter

Enter Valeria *and* Cydon.

Val. What diſmal Scene of Death is here prepar'd!
Max. Now ſtrike.
Val. They ſhall not ſtrike till I am heard.
Max. From whence does this new impudence proceed,
That you dare alter that which I decreed?
Val. Ah, Sir, to what ſtrange courſes do you fly,
To make your ſelf abhorr'd for Cruelty!
The Empire groans under your bloudy Reign,
And its vaſt Body bleeds in every Vein.
Gaſping and pale, and fearing more, it lies;
And now you ſtab it in the very Eyes:
Your *Cæſar* and the Part'ner of your Bed;
Ah who can wiſh to live when they are dead?
If ever gentle pity touch'd your Breaſt ——
—— I cannot ſpeak, —— my Tears ſhall ſpeak the reſt.
[*Weeping and ſobbing.*
Por. She adds new grief to what I felt before,
And Fate has now no room to put in more.
Max. Away, thou ſhame and ſlander of my bloud. [*To* Val.
Who taught thee to be pitiful or good?
Val. What hope have I
The name of Virtue ſhould prevail with him,
Who thinks ev'n it, for which I plead, a Crime?
Yet Nature, ſure, ſome Argument may be;
If them you cannot pity, pity me.
Max. I will, and all the World ſhall judge it ſo:
I will th' exceſs of pity to you ſhow.
You ask to ſave
A dangerous Rebel, and diſloyal Wife,
And I in mercy —— will not take your Life.
Val. You more than kill me by this Cruelty,
And in their perſons bid your Daughter dy.
I honour *Berenice*'s Virtue much;
But for *Porphyrius* my love is ſuch,
I cannot, will not live when he is gone.
Max. I'll do that Cure for you which on my ſelf is done.
You muſt, like me, your Lover's Life remove;
Cut off your hope, and you deſtroy your Love,
If it were hard, I would not bid you try
The Med'cine: but 'tis but to let him dy.

Yet since you are so soft, (which you call good)
And are not yet confirm'd enough in bloud
To see his Death;
Your frailty shall be favour'd with this grace,
That they shall suffer in another place.
If after they are dead, their memory,
By any chance into your mind be brought,
Laugh, and divert it with some other thought.
Away with 'em.

[*Exeunt* Berenice, Porphyrius, Albinus, *carried off by Guards.*

Val. Since Pray'rs nor Tears can bend his cruel mind, [*Looking after* Porph.
Farewel, the best and bravest of Mankind;
How I have lov'd Heav'n knows; but there's a Fate,
Which hinders me from being fortunate.
My Father's crimes hang heavy on my head,
And like a gloomy Cloud about me spread;
I would in vain be pious, that's a grace
Which Heav'n permits not to a Tyrant's race.

Max. Hence to her Tent the Foolish Girl convey.

Val. Let me be just before I go away:
Placidius, I have vow'd to be your Wife;
Take then my hand, 'tis yours while I have Life.
One moment here, I must anothers be:
But this *Porphyrius* gives me back to thee.

Stabs her self twice, and then Placidius *wrests the Dagger from her.*

Placid. Help, help the Princess, help!

Max. What rage has urg'd this act which thou hast done?

Val. Thou, Tyrant, and thy Crimes have pull'd it on.
Thou who canst Death with such a pleasure see,
Now take thy fill, and glut thy sight in me.
But ——— I'll th' occasion of my Death forget;
Save him I love, and be my Father yet:
I can no more ——— *Porphyrius*, my dear ———

Cyd. Alas, she raves, and thinks *Porphyrius* here.

Val. Have I not yet deserv'd thee now I die?
Is *Berenice* still more fair than I?
Porphyrius, do not swim before my sight;
Stand still, and let me, let me aim aright.
Stand still but while thy poor *Valeria* dies,
And sighs her Soul into her Lovers Eyes. [*Dies.*

Placid. She's gone from Earth, and with her went away
All of the Tyrant that deserv'd to stay:

I've

I've loſt in her all joys that life can give;
And only to revenge her death would live —— [*Aſide.*
Cyd. The Gods have claim'd her, and we muſt reſign.
Max. What had the Gods to do with me or mine?
Did I moleſt your Heav'n? ——
Why ſhould you then make *Maximin* your Foe,
Who paid you Tribute, which he need not do?
Your Altars I with ſmoke of Gumms did crown:
For which you lean'd your hungry Noſtrils down:
All daily gaping for my Incenſe there,
More than your Sun could draw you in a Year.
And you for this theſe Plagues on me have ſent;
But by the Gods (by *Maximin* I meant)
Henceforth I and my World
Hoſtility with you and yours declare:
Look to it, Gods, for you th' Aggreſſors are.
Keep you your Rain and Sun-ſhine in your Skies,
And I'll keep back my Flame and Sacrifice.
Your Trade of Heav'n ſhall ſoon be at a ſtand,
And all your Goods lie dead upon your hand.
Placid. Thus, Tyrant, ſince the Gods th' Aggreſſors are, [*Stabbing him.*
Thus by this ſtroke they have begun the War.
Maximin *ſtruggles with him, and gets the Dagger from him.*
Max. Thus I return the ſtrokes which they have giv'n; [*Stabbing* Placid.
Thus, Traitor, thus; and thus I would to Heav'n.
Placidius *falls, and the Emperour ſtaggers after him, and ſits down upon him; the Guards come to help the Emperour.*
Max. Stand off, and let me, ere my ſtrength be gone,
Take my laſt pleaſure of revenge, alone.

Enter a Centurion.

Cen. Arm, Arm; the Camp is in a mutiny:
For *Rome* and Liberty the Souldiers cry.
Porphyrius mov'd their pity as he went,
To reſcue *Berenice* from puniſhment.
And now he heads their new-attempted crime.
Max. Now I am down, the Gods have watch'd their time.
You think ——
To ſave your credit, feeble Deities;
But I will give my ſelf the ſtrength to riſe.
He ſtrives to get up, and being up, ſtaggers.
It wonnot be ——

My Body has not pow'r my Mind to bear.
I muſt return again—— and conquer here. [*Sits down upon the Body.*
My Coward Body does my Will controul;
Farewel thou baſe Deſerter of my Soul.
I'll ſhake this Carcaſs off, and be obey'd;
Reign an Imperial Ghoſt without its aid.
Go, Souldiers, take my Enſigns with you, fight,
And vanquiſh Rebels in your Sovereign's Right:
Before I dye———
Bring me *Porphyrius* and my Empreſs dead;
I would brave Heav'n, in my each hand a Head.
Placid. Do not regard a dying Tyrant's Breath, [*To the Souldiers.*
He can but look revenge on you in Death.
Max. Vanquiſh'd, and dar'ſt thou yet a Rebel be?
Thus——I can more than look revenge on thee. [*Stabs him again.*
Placid. Oh, I am gone! [*Dies.*
Max. ———And after thee I go,
Revenging ſtill, and following ev'n to th' other World my Blow.
[*Stabs him again.*
And ſhoving back this Earth on which I ſit,
I'll mount—— and ſcatter all the Gods I hit. [*Dies.*

Enter Porphyrius, Berenice, Albinus, *Souldiers.* Porphyrius *looks on the Bodies entring, and ſpeaks.*

Por. 'Tis done before, (this mighty work of Fate!)
And I am glad our Swords are come too late.
He was my Prince, and though a bloody one,
I ſhould have conquer'd, and have mercy ſhown.
Sheath all your Swords, and ceaſe your enmitie;
They are not Foes, but *Romans* whom you ſee.
Ber. He was my Tyrant, but my Husband too;
And therefore Duty will ſome tears allow.
Por. Placidius here!
And fair *Valeria* new depriv'd of Breath?
Who can unriddle this dumb Show of Death?
Cyd. When, Sir, her Father did your Life deny,
She kill'd her ſelf, that ſhe with you might dye.
Placidius made the Emp'rour's Death his crime;
Who, dying, did revenge his Death on him.
[Poryhyrius *kneels, and takes* Valeria's *hand.*
Por. For thy dear ſake, I vow each Week I live,
One Day to faſting and juſt grief I'll give:

And

And what hard Fate did to thy Life deny,
My Gratitude ſhall pay thy Memory.
Cent. Mean time to you belongs th' Imperial Pow'r:
We with one Voice ſalute you Emperour.
Souldiers. Long live *Porphyrius*, Emperour of the *Romans*.
Por. Too much, my Country-men, your love you ſhow,
That you have thought me worthy to be ſo.
But, to requite that Love, I muſt take care
Not to engage you in a Civil War.
Two Emperours at *Rome* the Senate choſe,
And whom they chuſe no *Roman* ſhould oppoſe.
In Peace or War let Monarchs hope or fear;
All my Ambition ſhall be bounded here. [*Kiſſing* Berenice's *hand.*
Ber. I have too lately been a Prince's Wife,
And fear th' unlucky Omen of the Life.
Like a rich Veſſel beat by Storms to Shore,
'Twere madneſs ſhould I venture out once more.
Of glorious troubles I will take no part,
And in no Empire reign, but of your heart.
Por. Let to the Winds your Golden Eagles fly, [*To the Souldiers.*
Your Trumpets ſound a bloodleſs Victory:
Our Armes no more let *Aquileia* fear,
But to her Gates our peaceful Enſigns bear.
While I mix Cypreſs with my Myrtle Wreath.
Joy for your Life, and mourn *Valeria*'s Death. [*Exeunt omnes.*

FINIS.

Epilogue

Spoken by Mrs *Ellen*, when she was to be carried off dead by the Bearers.

To the Bearer. *Hold, are you mad? you damn'd confounded Dog,*
I am to rise, and speak the Epilogue.
To the Audience] *I come, kind Gentlemen, strange News to tell ye,*
I am the Ghost of poor departed Nelly.
Sweet Ladies, be not frighted, I'll be civil,
I'm what I was, a little harmless Devil.
For after Death, we Sprights have just such Natures,
We had, for all the World, when humane Creatures;
And therefore I, that was an Actress here,
Play all my tricks in Hell, a Goblin there.
Gallants, look to't, you say there are no Sprights;
But I'll come dance about your Beds at Nights.
And 'faith you'll be in a sweet kind of taking,
When I surprize you between sleep and waking.
To tell you true, I walk because I die
Out of my Calling in a Tragedy.
O Poet, damn'd dull Poet, who could prove
So senseless, to make Nelly *die for Love;*
Nay, what's yet worse, to kill me in the prime
Of Easter-*Term, in Tart and Cheesecake-time!*
~~*I'll fit the Fop, for I'll not one word say*~~
T' excuse his godly, out of fashion, Play.
A Play, which if you dare but twice sit out,
You'll all be slander'd, and be thought devout.
But farewel, Gentlemen, make haste to me,
I'm sure ere long to have your Company.
As for my Epitaph when I am gone,
I'll trust no Poet, but will write my own.

Here *Nelly* lies, who, though she liv'd a Slater'n,
Yet di'd a Princess, acting in St. *Cathar'n.*

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